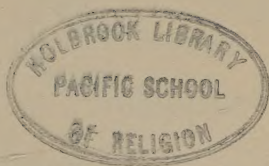






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Oct. 31. 1896.





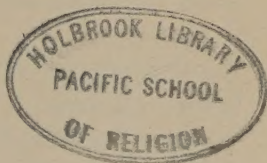
THE PACIFIC COAST PULPIT



EDITED BY THE REV. D. HANSON IRWIN,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE

REV. ROBERT MACKENZIE, D. D.



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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

IF any apology be demanded for flooding the theological market with another volume of sermons, let it be found in the introduction to this volume, kindly furnished by my friend, the Rev. Dr. Mackenzie, or in the volume itself, which, I beg leave to think, is no unworthy addition to the sermon literature of the day.

I would acknowledge the uniform kindness of my brethren on the Coast, and so express to them my thanks that I have been permitted to complete this selection of their pulpit work with the single aim and hope that as their ministry from the pulpit has been used of God to the conversion of souls and the confirming of their faith, so now in a still larger sense, the Divine Spirit may carry these arrows of gospel truth home to the mind and heart of "the larger congregation."

It has been my privilege to listen to the delivery of some of these sermons, and I cordially assent that in some cases the charm of personal magnetism has much to do with the warmth of the reception of the Divine truth. I am not without hope that the reading may be as profitable to others as the hearing was to me.

It is necessary I should insert an explanatory remark concerning the address of Rev. Ng Poon Chew. That good brother preaches in the Chinese mission in San Francisco *in Chinese*; and such preaching, when translated, would lose its value for the general hearer or reader. For this reason, and at his special request, I have published an address which he delivered before a large congregation during the famous religious revival of 1892.

I must gratefully acknowledge the manner in which the work of publishing has been executed; and the assistance rendered me in the same by Mr. Fleming H. Revell.

I commend these sermons to the careful perusal of all who are ready to receive the truth in the love of it, and I pray the Divine blessing may attend the word thus faithfully expounded.

D. HANSON IRWIN.

San Francisco, Cal., October, 1893.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE are two things the same everywhere, in London and New York, in Boston and San Francisco,—the human heart and the Word of God. And when these two are properly brought together, the same result everywhere follows. We do not meet a different race of men on the Pacific Coast, nor do we need a special Bible for California. Both these are stereotyped. We have no call to tamper with the plates.

The circumstances and accidents of society, however, vary in varying times and places. There is a time current and place current characteristic of this Coast, which must be taken into practical account by the preacher. Custom does not keep the ministry here. There is no premium on the profession of Christianity. A man's position in business, or politics, a woman's position in society, is not materially affected by attendance or non-attendance at church.

The sun shines, and the rain falls ; the spring in matchless beauty, and the autumn in marvelous plenty, come down on both alike, and God does not settle his accounts on the first of each October out here. Life seems prosperous without religion, and

there is a tacit conviction cherished by many that religion is not so important but that one can get along very well without it in California.

It is not infidelity, there is not much of that here; infidelity requires a more earnest soil than we yet have. It is not agnosticism; God is acknowledged and believed in and believed to govern, good-naturedly withal. It is not any form of active antagonism to Christ and Christianity, but a contented indifferentism, a modern Athenianism,—“We will hear thee again on this matter,” while they go back to the market-place.

This condition can be successfully met only by an evangelical, orthodox gospel. It is sometimes thought that the demands of the gospel must be modified and its warnings softened in such a country as this. No greater mistake can be made. The theology which would prevail must be an out-and-out theology. The usual compromises which have dulled the conscience of those in older communities opposed to an evangelical gospel are not equally successful here. Here, unless a man has real religion, he sees no necessity for professing or supporting the outward appearance of one. The West is conservative in theology, not because its ministers are ignorant of the scholastic issues of the day, but because they daily meet not a speculative, but a practical philosophy of life, and have to meet it, not with the “perhaps” of a possible interpreta-

tion, but with the "Thus saith the Lord" of a positive conviction. Any indefiniteness or uncertainty is discovered and resented first by the people, who leave the guesser with the remark that they have guesses enough of their own.

Nor does sensationalism, commonly understood, avail in the community. There is already so much genuine, untrammelled sensationalism in business, in society, and in the newspaper, that people coming to church pray to be delivered from it, knowing well its hollowness. The big drum has never been successfully beat for any length of time out here. The drum and the drummer have appeared occasionally in each of the denominations, but after a brief performance they have been excused.

The truth as it is in Christ, preached in knowledge, in sympathy, and in love, will accomplish here what it has accomplished elsewhere,—the conversion and sanctification of men, and nothing else will.

ROBT. MACKENZIE.

San Francisco, Cal., October, 1893.

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REV. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

THE INCARNATE WORD.

BY REV. JOHN Q. ADAMS,

Pastor Westminster Presbyterian Church, San Francisco, California.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth. John 1: 14.

THE Word was made flesh. He became what He was not before, a man, a whole man, a man in his physical, intellectual, and moral nature. The text asserts "the reality and the integrity of the human mode of existence into which the Word entered."—*Godet*.

The Word became flesh and dwelt, tabernacled, among us, full of grace and truth. The glory of this Word, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, John saw. He heard, he saw, he intently regarded, and he handled this Word, who became flesh.

But who is this Word? The Word was "in the beginning with God," and "was God" in that beginning; all things were made by Him; He is the Life and Light of men; His own received Him not, but He gives power, right, privilege, to those

who receive Him, to become the children of God ; He becomes man, and other men gaze upon Him ; a forerunner bears witness to Him, and declares that "of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace," and that this grace came by Jesus Christ. The Word, then, is Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, who, though manifested in the flesh, was God, and *is* in the bosom of the Father. No plainer statements are needed.

This prologue to John's Gospel has been memorable in the history of Christian thought. Rarely, if ever, have such profound truths been expressed in so few words, or have words had concentrated upon them so much study. They teach us that the Word, Jesus Christ, existed prior to his earthly birth, and before all created things, and that He was possessed of a superhuman character. The Creator of all created things, He is excluded from their number, and His eternal Deity affirmed ; for when time began, He *was*. He is the Life, the Light, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, the Word become flesh and dwelling among men.

We have, then, as our fundamental thought, the very foundation of our faith, the basis of the Gospel, the INCARNATION OF GOD IN MAN. What is thus affirmed is not an isolated truth, nor one that appears only in John's Gospel. You cannot tear it out of this Bible ; it cannot be separated from this Gospel, without its becoming another

Bible, another Gospel. The fate of Christianity rests upon this fact. We affirm, also, that it is the supreme fact of history. It is almost a trite statement to make, that as once all roads led to Rome, so all ancient history leads to Bethlehem's manger; and that from Jesus of Nazareth, modern history and civilization date their beginning and have received their organizing law. If, then, this Incarnation be impossible, if its proofs be insufficient, if we are compelled to reject it, then with it goes this Book and that Man who has deceived all the ages; and history becomes a tangled skein. Strange, indeed, will it be if He who is "the purest of the mighty, the mightiest of the pure; who with His pierced hands raised empires from their foundations, turned the stream of history from its old channels, and still continues to rule and guide the ages," shall at last be found to be other than He claimed, or only the creation of an idle brain and a dying world!

This question, then, of the Incarnation becomes of practical interest to us, even though sometimes it may seem a hard and dry subject, encrusted with the thought, wise or unwise, of the past. If it be not true, our faith is vain. And let it be remembered just here that it concerns primarily a revealed *fact*, not a dogma, not an abstract truth. Its historical verity and our belief of it are the first things involved, and not our speculative knowledge of its

processes. The latter will always be somewhat vague and indefinite, the former may be clear and positive.

I.

In further studying this question, consider in the first place, that the history of religious thought shows nothing more clearly than this; that men everywhere, in all conditions of society, and under all forms of religious belief, have felt the necessity of a mediator to stand between them and the Most High God. They have called Him by different names, but they have felt that He must be in some sense Deity incarnate, the divine and human in one person.

We do not dispute with those who assert that other religions have had their incarnations. It is what ought to have been expected, if Jesus Christ is the answer of heaven to the cry of earth. This admitted fact is an argument for the Christian truth. A solid foundation is thus furnished for the belief that the *idea* so universal has been realized in a *fact*, the actual union of God and man in one person. The heathen religions have the idea; the Christian religion alone has the reality. Every one who has a conscience has the ideal of a perfect man. He wants a model, and he creates one, but he wants more than this,—even the reality. That is given him in **Jesus Christ**, and nowhere else.

It is to be remembered in this connection that within the historical period these heathen incarnations, so-called, have tended to greater definiteness. The less clear and certain have been succeeded by the more positive and definite. Then, if we go back to the earliest records, into the pre-historic period, we seem to find clearer ideas on this matter than in history's morning. In other words, men worked from light into darkness, and then from the darkness toward the light again, in their thinking on this matter. But at the best these are only "disfigured incarnations." Still they represent a trend of thought, a cry of the soul, that, if human nature be not a lie, must find its answer somewhere. The conclusion is certainly warranted from all this that there must be some grand necessity in human nature demanding such a manifestation, or it would not have been universally craved.

It is difficult to understand how any one after comparing these alleged incarnations with the Biblical, Christian conception, can honestly assert that the latter has grown out of the former. This, as is well known, is often the dogmatic assertion of certain would-be theologians in these days. But such a theory utterly fails to account for what is distinctive in the Christian idea, for that which separates it by an immeasurable distance from any other supposed incarnation. Thus the Christian

idea itself may be brought forward as a further element in the proof of the *fact*. Whence this idea, so holy, so entirely separated from everything that is coarse, low, degrading, unworthy of God or man, which mars the world's thinking elsewhere on this subject, if the incarnation of Jesus Christ as a fact is not the foundation of the idea, if the fact does not answer to the idea as the original to its shadow? Moreover Christianity teaches an incarnation in order to a redemption, and thus is absolutely separated from other religious systems and from philosophical teachings on this matter.

It follows from this universal want and this Christian answer to it, that the man who attempts to change the thinking that has ruled the world for many centuries, must have something like in kind to offer, or there is little hope of his success. Kant says somewhere: "Facts without ideas are blind, and ideas without facts are empty." The world has written in the past, and is writing to-day, its condemnation—because it has found them empty—upon many a scheme without facts offered it in place of that Manger and that Cross. And the attempt to resolve the incarnation of Jesus Christ into the idea of God in humanity, God in nature, God in everything, is putting emptiness in place of the Divine fullness. A personal God-man, manifested in historic time, alone answers the universal cry. The heart of man demands it. The only

way to be rid of it is to educate him out of it, and in this process you have crushed out some of his noblest and holiest aspirations, dwarfed and crippled his soul.

Still further confirmation of the necessity for a mediator is given by those who reject, sometimes with contempt, the Christian idea and fact. "Human struggle," says Weiss, "has ever been a struggle toward an incarnation;" and in saying this he considers he has set aside any necessity for *the Incarnation*. But that struggle is hopeless, and has no promise of success, if it was not ended when the angel chorus announced the birth of Christ our Lord. "The Infinite Mother," says Theodore Parker, "spreads wide her arms to fold us to that universal breast, and is ready to inspire your soul."—*Sermons of Religion*, p. 392. Here we have a God-woman! Figurative language has gone mad, but the heart has simply cried out for what the head had denied it.

Will not God help in this struggle? Will He not answer this cry? Will He not meet this universal want? Is it not a fitting place for God to intervene? If not, then our holiest aspirations only mock us, the heart of man has cruelly deceived him, and in place of a fact there is only emptiness. "I need a God," a pagan of old is reported as saying, "who can speak to me and lead me." Has He come? or look we for another?

II.

We are thus led, in the second place, to consider whether Jesus Christ meets this demand. Do the facts concerning Him satisfy the necessities of the case?

The opinions with reference to Jesus Christ may be classed for our purpose now under three general divisions: First, that He was a mere man, not altogether faultless, who fell upon fortunate times, and into line with providential developments. But if only a man, why not other men like him in the ages since, who are farther along in the line of development, and are placed in more favorable circumstances than He? As well account for the "Great Eastern" by saying that a school-boy whittled it with his jack-knife, or affirm that the Canyon of the Colorado was furrowed with a plow. The theory must account for the facts, and no mere man could ever have plowed the ages as He has done. Secondly, that He was a being more than human, but less than God. Then He is still at an infinite distance from God, but at a measurable distance from the worm. This theory does not meet the great want, and leaves a vacuum in history. Thirdly, that he was both the man of Nazareth and the only begotten and eternal Son of God. This is indeed a startling statement! But such as this He claims to be; and they who have opened their

hearts to receive Him ratify the claim. Account for it as you may, there is something about that Babe in Bethlehem's manger, that has caused more hearts to rejoice in His advent, than in all other birthdays, hoary with the centuries or fresh in remembrance. But the only reason for it that accounts for the facts is that men have believed and still believe that there God and man met in one, in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of men.

There is a mystery here, great and deep. We have climbed a lofty mountain peak in the moral and religious world when we stand on the mount of the Incarnation ; but as is the case even from Shasta's lofty dome, a horizon of darkness and ignorance bounds our vision. We need not deny nor attempt to cover up this fact. If it were not so, the God of grace would be a different Being from the God of nature. But it is a mystery which rests on facts that cannot be set aside. We are dealing with "a problem, a mystery, a symmetrical and exquisite conception, which certainly exists," though man may vehemently declare that he knows not how it can be, nor whence it is.

"Treat this claim," says some one, "as a similar claim of other men has been treated." The trouble is, the facts will not let us. We are not dealing with a man like other men, nor with a claim like other claims. They are separate and distinct. We have here the unique Man of all the ages, and a

unique claim in its absolute holiness and redemptive purpose.

The question, then, is not whether there is here a mystery, but whether the mystery is in harmony with all the rest and consistent with itself; for all the facts demand a supernatural and mysterious person. Are there marks in all this history of a twofold nature? Does this life begin and end in a mystery? Is the preparation for it, and the outcome of it, consistent with the mystery of the person? No long search is required to answer these questions.

In the preparation for His coming He stands alone. No such anticipations of the coming of any other have ever been seen. Not only when the time came was one found to fill the place, as in the course of history elsewhere, but for long centuries a nation had been trained to wait for His law. They were anxiously peering into the future, expecting some one greater than Moses; David's "Lord," Isaiah's "King" and "Man of Sorrows," Daniel's "Son of Man," and Malachi's "Messenger of the Covenant." Here is the fact, and the theory must recognize it. Ancient history converged to that Manger and that Cross. Away off upon the horizon some few true souls saw the faintest promise of the coming day, and were glad. The centuries rolled by, and brighter grew the sky, till when the Sun of Righteousness arose upon the

world, all eyes were fastened on Him as the hope of all, and the angels joined with men in heralding His advent. Throughout this preparation we catch glimpses, we find intimations, of the Incarnation. There are mysterious appearances only understood in the light of the New Testament. Fitting preludes they are to the mysteries that center in the Cradle and the Cross. Mysteries still, though we have beheld His glory. To Abraham, to Jacob, to Moses, and to other olden worthies, they were granted. And even in the dim twilight in which they saw Him, they knew Him as the "Angel of the Lord." To them He was a "King," "the Mighty God," "Father of Eternity," "the Prince of Peace," "the sure Foundation," and "the Righteous Branch." But He was also a "Child," a "Man of Sorrows," a "Root out of dry ground," the "Seed of the woman," a "Son of David," and "the Despised and Rejected of men."

What means this preparation for His coming? this dual character of the promised One? the pre-figurations of God manifest in the flesh? Is not the mystery which follows fittingly preceded by the mystery of the preparation? Must not the right answer to the question, Who is He? be based on these facts, even though they be mysterious?

When the long course of preparation was ended, and the fullness of the time had come, the dual mystery still continues. The introduction

to His humanity takes place in a stable; that to His divinity amid scenes that are strange and supernatural, not like the ordinary and the human. We have the Annunciation and the triumphing faith of the mother of our Lord; the angel chorus and the star; the song of Simeon, and Anna's response; the temple scene when twelve years of age; the speaking with authority and the mighty works; the Garden and the Cross; the resurrection and the ascension; and his regnant power among men ever since;—all this of Him who was hungry and thirsty, who was weary and troubled, who wept and died. What is the meaning of it all? We have as much reason for doubting our own identity, as these facts. Does not the mystery continue? and is it not consistent? Does it not strengthen the argument, and furnish additional proof of the Incarnation?

Then consider for a moment Christ's wholly unique position in history. It has been won against every adverse circumstance,—birth, nation, education, social position, poverty, failure to commit a word to writing, and shameful death at the hands of His own countrymen. While at the same time, the men who loved Him with a love stronger than they loved life, and who wrote His life, were so reticent that they have scarcely left us a hint that enables us to reproduce His personal appearance. Almost everything of detail consid-

ered essential to biography is omitted. Jesus himself only wrote upon the sand. Rightly, it would seem, might His contemporaries have said that this represented His influence, which the first breath of heaven, or wave of earth would destroy. Yet "His influence is the marvel of history." How can these things be? Why is it that the only nations that are free to-day, are those which to some extent have been baptized with His influence? Why is it that civilization has marched with Jesus Christ through the centuries and among the nations? No reasonable explanation has yet been given, save that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Rest assured that this idea of the Incarnate Word "would scarcely have survived the first shock of solid opposition" it certainly has met, much less have marched "in the van of nineteen centuries with unwearied feet," as it certainly has done, if the idea did not rest on the solid ground of fact.

There is no question but that He was a man.
For,—

"Like as a man, he trod on earthly soil,
He bore each pang, and strove in weary toil ;
He spake with human words, with pity sighed ;
Like us he mourned, and feared, and wept, and died."

None the less surely do the facts here considered tell us that He is something more than man—that we worship in Jesus of Nazareth, God manifest in the flesh,

Review briefly the ground gone over. We have found that John plainly declares that the Word was God incarnate, and that this is in harmony with the other teachings of this book. We have recognized the fact that there has been a universal want felt for such an Incarnation; and we have rightly reasoned, we believe, that this want warrants us in believing that God will satisfy it, else our nature is a lie, and God a deceiver. We have found it impossible to believe that the Scriptural idea was developed out of the other. We have admitted a mystery that is unexplained, but have found this mystery consistent with the facts. A mystery preceded Him, traveled with him in His life on earth, and has followed Him through the ages. All these facts receive their only satisfactory explanation in the statement that He was and is God. Renan has truly said: "A great life is an organic whole which cannot be constructed by the simple agglomeration of minute facts." We accept his statement, and affirm that here in the Gospels "a great life" is presented, which is "an organic whole," and which could not have been constructed if it was not a *real life*. And because it is a reality, God in human form has spoken to men.

The lessons that almost force themselves upon us are many, and must here be briefly stated:—

1. By becoming man, He has made known God.
"No man hath seen God at any time; the only

begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." For the chief part of its knowledge of God the world is indebted, not to nature, not to science, not to reason, but to Jesus Christ.

2. He who became man so continues to be,—“the man Christ Jesus.” Let us not lose hold of this great truth with all that it involves. The world needed the God-man in the first century, and it needs Him in the nineteenth as well. And, blessed be God, at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, He still continues to be man. We have here the truth made plain, that the body is an integral part of our humanity; and the assurance given that He will “fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory.” “To the Christian alone it is given to see the Man Christ Jesus, radiant in resurrection life, filling with His brightness the eternal future; and with Him, His redeemed perfected in their humanity, body, soul, and spirit.”—*Andrew's Revelation of God to Man*, p. 377.

3. By becoming man, He has become our brother. “And the warmth of His heart is more to us than the gems that sparkle in his crown.”

4. By becoming man, He has become our Redeemer. The Incarnation gives us a “sense of prodigious depths in human ruin,” but it also enables us to look upon “altitudes in human blessed-

ness." Made "in the likeness of sinful flesh," by his death He has "condemned sin in the flesh," and brought to us deliverance from its guilt and power. The greatness of the gift is in harmony with the greatness of the need. Sin has done its awful work, slavery and death are its fruits. But here is One who has conquered death, who has power to break the chains of sin and to let the oppressed go free. With peace and joy was his birth proclaimed ; and after centuries of trial He still offers peace and joy to every heart that admits Him. Open thy heart now, and let Christ be born in thee, "the hope of glory."

5. By becoming man, He has become our merciful and faithful High Priest. And having suffered Himself, being tempted, "He is able to succor them that are tempted."

6. The Incarnation gives us, also, the assurance that the work of the Redeemer shall be completed. We do not follow a defeated Leader, nor a forlorn hope. Light is here thrown upon the divine purposes, and even death itself is transformed into the vestibule of completed redemption.

7. This same Jesus, taken from us into heaven, shall so come again in like manner. For He "shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation." Heb. 9 : 28. "Amen : Come, Lord Jesus."

Till then, let us give Him our heart's best offering ; let us consecrate to Him our all ; let us obey His voice ; and let us never weary of proclaiming Him as the only Saviour, the Life and Light of men, the Word become flesh.

“Joy to the world, the Lord is come.
Let earth receive her King ;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing.”

SOME NEW THING.

BY REV. ARTHUR J. BROWN, D. D.,

Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Portland, Oregon.

For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing. Acts 17: 21.

ATHENS! the very name conjures up a host of pleasing memories,—memories of battle-field and studio, of bema and academy. It was a wonderful city, a city of spacious forums and graceful porticoes; of shapely statues and magnificent palaces; of temple-crowned hills looking up to a radiant sky, and away to a blue and sparkling sea. To that city we trace much of our intellectual inspiration. It has been happily characterized as one of those cities whose contributions to the world have been greater than those of empires. All Russia means less to us than that single town, whose population was never great as compared with modern cities; for there the human mind attained its highest culture. There appeared a long line of poets and philosophers, sculptors and architects, orators and statesmen, whose fame has survived the changes of



REV. ARTHUR BROWN, D. D.

more than twenty centuries, and which will survive the changes of twenty centuries to come. There beauty and valor, eloquence and song, patriotism and refinement, all physical graces and intellectual accomplishments, made their home. And to-day, we, though of a far-distant age and land, find a reverence for the achievements of Athens, compatible with nineteenth century enlightenment, and deem a knowledge of her language and literature indispensable to a liberal education.

But the city which Paul saw was not the glorious Athens of old. There was, indeed, no visible change. Outwardly, Athens was as magnificent as ever. Her public and private edifices were still numerous and costly. Innumerable statues still adorned her streets and temples. But there was an intellectual and moral decay. The vigor of the citizens had departed; the spirit of independence had vanished. Athens was no longer producing great men or doing memorable deeds; she was simply "trading" on the memory of the past glories. A Miltiades no longer led her citizens forth to war; a Pericles no longer guided her councils; a Socrates no longer disputed in her forums. Her streets were filled with shallow rhetoricians, who boasted of a greatness which they were not enhancing. It was a city of gossipers — of babblers — of men intellectually enfeebled and morally debased. Still "Greece, but living Greece no more."

As Paul walked the streets of this city, "his spirit was stirred in him." He saw the idolatry of the people, but he also saw another evidence of degeneracy which impressed him almost as deeply as the idolatry, and which was even more truly characteristic. It secured him a hearing, but it deprived the hearing of value. He describes it in the text: "All the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing." A manifest physical, intellectual, and moral weakness was strangely blended with an intense eagerness for novelty. We ordinarily associate a desire for new things with progress, but here that desire is associated with that which is the reverse of progress.

This warrants the statement that a desire for something new is not necessarily indicative of progress. Indeed, it may be indicative of regress. It may not be an earnest desire for something better, but a mere restless, uneasy craving for change. To seek the new simply because it is the new, and apart from any consideration of its intrinsic worth, is to go backward rather than forward.

I would not disparage legitimate desire for progress. Only a bigot will assert that "that which is new is not true, and that which is true is not new." Some new things are true, and some old things are false. **As** a rule, too, the collective

wisdom of an age has been greater than that of the age which preceded it. I am persuaded that the world is growing better and wiser. I should be sorry if it were not. God reigns. "There is yet more light to break out of His most holy Word," more truth to be discovered in the realms of nature and of mind. Our own age has made invaluable contributions to the stock of the world's knowledge, and succeeding ages will doubtless make other contributions equally valuable. Let reverent investigation go on. Let it be accorded the widest liberty. To hinder it were intellectual and moral treason.

But the contention now is, that progress and restlessness are not synonymous terms. It is not the seeking of "some new thing" which is wrong, but the "doing nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing." Indeed, so far from being good, it is evil. It indicates a fevered condition of the system—an unhealthy and morbid state. It begets instability of character and purpose. It leads to superficial ideas and modes of thinking. It withdraws attention from the tried and settled, and directs it to the flotsam and jetsam of daily happenings, the real importance of which is hardly ever discerned till time has set them in their true perspective. I do not mean, of course, that a knowledge of daily happenings is of no value; but it is not all that is of value. Much

occurred before our time which is of inestimable importance. Men need to-day, not less of the new, but more of the old, a wiser perception of its relative worth.

More seriously, this craving for something new often dupes men. As a matter of fact, most new things are comparatively worthless—not all, but most. Thousands of new books are being published every year, but whoever takes the time and patience to examine them, will find that the really valuable books are like Gratiano's two grains of wheat in two bushels of chaff. Originality is rare. What we commonly call originality is usually eccentricity, and eccentricity nearly always means a screw loose in the intellectual or moral machinery. If an alleged new thing proves to be really good, the presumption is that it is not as new as it was supposed to be.

But it not infrequently happens that the so-called new idea is an old error. We hear much in these days about materialism as the most formidable of modern foes to Christianity. But "the materialists of our day have not advanced a step upon the system of Epicurus," who lived three hundred years before Christ. Many deny the doctrine of the Trinity, who are apparently ignorant that such a man as Arius ever existed, and that every phase of the Trinitarian conflict was fought out in the fourth century by masters in apologetics.

We are told almost daily that modern thought has shown a belief in miracles to be unreasonable, and yet there is hardly a modern objection to miracles which was not anticipated by Celsus, who lived in the second century. Multitudes have adopted the theories of Strauss regarding the person of Christ, who evidently do not know that the theory of Strauss has been repudiated in the land of his birth, and that "there is not enough left of the mythical theory of Strauss to make a fig-leaf to cover the shame of modern skepticism." The majority of these people who so ostentatiously parade themselves as "advanced thinkers," are really retrogressive thinkers. So far from being originators of anything new and good, they are as a rule, simply body-snatchers, prowling in the world's theological grave-yard, resurrecting moldering skeletons, dressing them up showily, and complacently displaying them to the world as the "latest teachings of modern science." Ever and anon some troubled soul sends me a newspaper clipping containing an attack upon evangelical Christianity, and implores me to write an article in reply. But I usually find the article to be a rehash of arguments which have not only been refuted a hundred times, but which are no longer used even by intelligent skeptics. It is strange that some newspapers, which are conspicuously able in their discussion of secular topics, should sometimes allow

their "religious" editors to convert their columns into a veritable museum of malodorous antiquities. Instead of being tempted to write an article in reply, I am more often tempted to make the request which Mark Twain is said to have made of the Egyptian guide who was waxing eloquent over a collection of mummies: "If you have any nice, fresh corpses, now, trot them out; but don't try to palm off any more of these moldy mummies on us."

Conversely, the presumption is that the old and established ideas are true. Not always, I grant. I would not fall into the opposite error. I would not question the reality or the value of the many great achievements of the present age. But it is a fair presumption that the old is the true. This was so of Athens in the time of Paul. The past was glorious, but the Athenians of Paul's day, with all their passion for hearing or telling some new thing, added nothing to the stock of the world's knowledge. For all that we owe to Athens, we go centuries back of those babblers.

It is a recognized principle in our civil government that the opinion of the multitude is more apt to be correct than the opinion of the individual. Our thought is but the development of this principle. The accumulated wisdom of ages is more likely to be of value than the wisdom of a single generation. Dryden and Milton were contemporaries. The age in which they lived thought Dryden

the greater poet, but posterity has reversed that judgment. The world now places Milton in the front rank of poets, and Dryden in the third rank. So, too, the contemporaries of John Bunyan regarded him and his work with contempt, and even Cowper in his exquisitely appreciative tribute said : —

“I name thee not, lest so despised a name
Should move a sneer at thy deserved fame.”

But to-day the “Pilgrim’s Progress” is considered one of the world’s best books, and the most fastidious critics vie with each other in their tributes of praise. When any idea, or book, or institution has withstood the storms of ages and approved itself to the judgment of successive generations, the probabilities are that it is based on eternal truth. This is well illustrated by the history of the Church. How enduring her power has been ! Centuries have come and gone, empires have risen and crumbled, but the Church of God has remained. Revolutions which have brought ruin to everything else have only hastened her onward progress.

“O, where are kings and empires now,
Of old that went and came ?
But, Lord, thy church is praying yet,
A thousand years the same.

“Unshaken as eternal hills,
Immovable she stands,
A mountain that shall fill the earth —
A house not made by hands.”

All history teaches us that progress is as likely to consist in getting back to old standards as in creating new ones. These things need to be remembered in this age, particularly in America. A craving for the new is fast becoming a national characteristic. We have a comparatively new country ; we are giving the world some new ideas and inventions of real value, and, intoxicated by our success, we are in danger of being led into the restless spirit of the Athenians of Paul's time, who "spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing." European observers like Bryce notice this spirit and comment upon it. There is real ground for the apprehension that we may become a volatile people, lacking in stability and weight of character.

We see this in literature, in the demand for new books, and in the neglect of old ones of tried value. "Robert Elsmere" is a case in point. The book is simply a dressing-up in popular, narrative style, of the stalest and shallowest rationalistic objections to Christianity. Great was the commotion which it excited ; dire were the prophecies of the ruin which it would accomplish in the church ! But lo ! that wonderful book, which was so vociferously praised, and which was to empty all our churches, is now a drug in the market ; and some time ago I saw a great stack of copies surmounted by a placard bearing the inscription : " 'Robert Elsmere' and a

Cake of Soap for 25 cents ; ” and the salesman told me that he could not get rid of the book even at that price. Go into any public library, and you will find that the new and silly modern society novels are soiled and worn by frequent reading, while the world's really valuable books stand upon the shelves unsoiled, save by the dust which has had ample time to accumulate upon them since they were last called for.

We see it in science, in the haste with which new theories are accepted and promulgated as facts. Indeed, no matter how wild a theory is, there are always multitudes who are ready to seize it, and loudly to proclaim that all existing institutions must be reorganized in harmony with it. Some one asked me the other day, “Why is it that the majority of scientific men are not Christians ?” The question is based upon a false assumption. The majority of scientific men are Christians. Our scientific men are, as a rule, the professors of science in our colleges and universities, and nine tenths of them are, and by the charters of their institutions must be, Christians. The greatest scientists the world has known have been disciples of Christ. Witness Copernicus, Kepler, Newton, Bayle, Cuvier, Faraday, Herschell, Brewster, Maxwell, and many others. At a recent convention of scientific men, the proceedings were opened with prayer, and a daily prayer-meeting was maintained

by the delegates, a large majority of whom were Christians. The greatest and best men of our own as of past ages have been Christian men. Every member of the present Supreme Court of the United States is a Christian. Gladstone declares—and his testimony outweighs that of a host of others—that “neither the highest poetry nor the highest philosophy can now exist in separation from that new conception of the relations between God and man which Christianity has supplied.” And he adds, that of the sixty master minds with whom he has come in contact during his long public life, and who have moulded the affairs of the modern world, all but five were Christians.

We are sometimes told that there is a conflict between science and religion. It is a mistake. There is no conflict between science and religion. Indeed, Christianity has been the mother of all the science there is, has founded and maintained the institutions in which the science is taught, and has furnished, and is to-day furnishing, the men who preside over those institutions. Those who believe that the majority of scientific men are not Christians, have been deceived by the vociferous clamor of a comparatively small number of scientific men, who make up for the paucity of their numbers by the prodigiousness of their noise, and who resemble nothing else so much as the “three Tooley Street tailors,” who issued a proclamation commencing, “We, the

people of England." The most eminent among them is Professor Huxley. A minister's opinion of him might not be considered valuable, but listen to the opinion of the Duke of Argyle, one of the foremost thinkers of the modern world. Speaking of Professor Huxley, he says: "Loud and confident in matters in which both he and we are profoundly ignorant, we see him hardly less boisterous in asserting ignorance where the materials of knowledge lie abundant to our hands. We have seen his canons of criticism — how rude and undiscerning; his claim for the physical science — how inflated; his own dealings with one of them — how shallow and how dogmatic." Talk about the bigotry of theology! The bigotry of some of these agnostic infidels would make Torquemada turn green with envy if he could witness it. "What is an agnostic?" Burdette represents a small boy as asking, who was reading something by Huxley. "An agnostic," replied Uncle George, "is a man who loudly declares that he knows nothing, and gets mad and abuses you if you believe him. He says he doesn't know anything, but he really believes he knows everything."

We see this same craving for new things in everyday life, in the restless moving of people from place to place, in the frequency of business changes, in the small talk of society, in the rage for speculation. It seems to be the great object in life of

many people to devise something novel, "something we've never had before,"—the utility of the thing devised being usually a secondary consideration.

And we see it especially in religion. Many people do not like the old ideas of sin and atonement, of regeneration and sovereignty. They want something new, and the minister who gratifies them is sure to have a large, though unsubstantial following. Multitudes are hurried hither and thither by their craving for change. It may be said of them in a sense which the inspired writer did not contemplate, that "here they have no continuing city." Their religious convictions are those of the last book they have read or the last person they have talked with. They have no settled ideas of truth. They are "spending their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing." Some people lament the credulity of faith, but they might more profitably lament the credulity of skepticism. Men who will not believe the plainest and most clearly established facts of Christianity, almost fall over each other in their eagerness to accept anti-Christian theories which involve ten times more serious difficulties than the doctrines of Christianity. They stand like eaglets, opening their mouths at every passing shadow or slight noise, and ready to swallow with avidity whatever may be thrown

into them. Men and brethren, there is danger in this tendency. Athens was never so degenerate, never so effeminate, never so despicable, as when her citizens "spent their time in doing nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing."

Suffer me in conclusion to make two additional remarks: First, a disposition to undervalue established ideas or institutions is a sign of a weak mind. A misconception is prevalent at this point. There are some, particularly among the young, who say that they will not accept anything which they have not personally investigated and found to be true; and they pride themselves upon that position, and deem it an evidence of intellectual strength and independence. As a matter of fact, it is simply an evidence of intellectual conceit and moral debility. Belief is normal to sense and health; unbelief is abnormal to both. He is not a wise man who assumes that all who have lived before him were either ignorant or foolish, and that wisdom appeared in the world at the moment he was ushered into it. It is sheer folly to put an interrogation point after all the truths in the horizon till you have examined them for yourselves. Has the world learned nothing in all these thousands of years? Has it proved nothing to be true? Does the endorsement of ages create no favorable presumption? Of course, investigate for yourselves as soon

as possible and as profoundly as possible. Christianity does not demand blind faith. It is not afraid of examination. It has stood the questionings of nineteen hundred years, and it can probably stand yours. But pending such investigation, you will do well to assume the truthfulness of that which the world has long held to be true. A sensible man will no more refuse to become a Christian because he has not had time to investigate for himself the history and claims of Christianity, than he will refuse to become a citizen of the country in which he was born and reared, until he has satisfied himself by years of study that the institutions of that country are better than the institutions of other countries. He who declines to avail himself of an electric car, because he has not yet learned what electricity is, is not a wise man, but a fool.

Secondly, in this restless age, we need a progressive conservatism, a willingness to accept the new when it is true, but a holding fast to the old which has demonstrated its right to be. Why, the sublime truths of the world are old! The sovereignty and fatherhood of God, the inspiration of the Bible, the Holy Spirit's work and power,—these and kindred truths are not new. This Gospel which we preach, and in which lies the hope of the race, is not a new Gospel. It has been in the world nearly two thousand years. It has been preached amid

the snows of Greenland and in the jungles of Africa ; on the steppes of Asia and in the valleys of South America. It has rescued millions from selfishness and sin, from temporal and eternal ruin. It has assuaged earth's sorrows. It has given scope and dignity to human life. It has filled dying hours with joy and peace. It has been, and it is, the mightiest of agencies for the saving and uplifting of a lost and dying race. And we love it because it is old, because time has not been able to weaken it or exposure to tarnish it,—because all the attacks of earth and hell have not been able to overthrow it. It stands before us after the lapse of all these tumultuous centuries, still fadeless in beauty, majestic in strength, and imperishable in vitality.

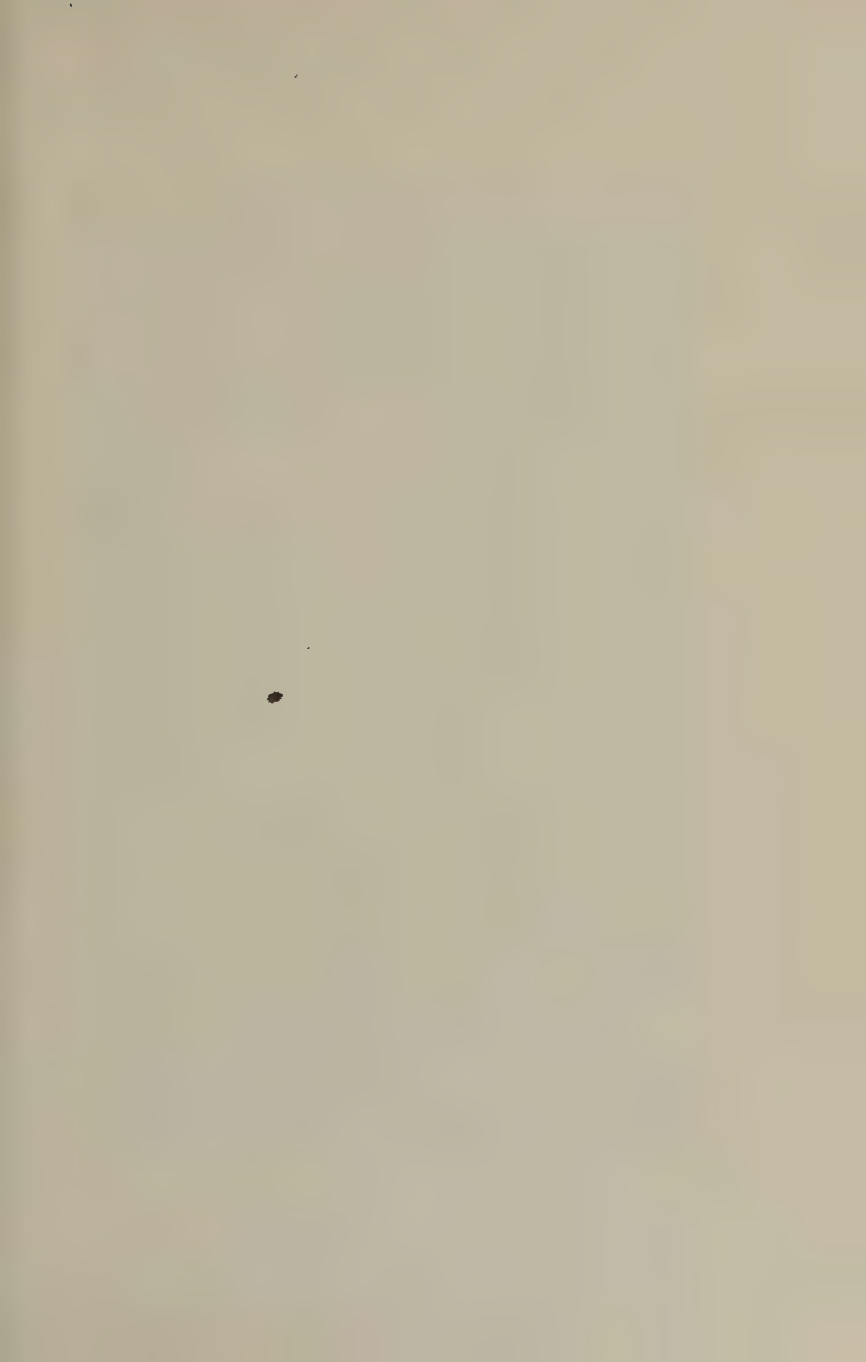
That Gospel I declare unto you. I have no other. I want no other. I declare it boldly, because it has been tested by time and found to be true. I proclaim it to you as the solution, and the only solution, of the problems of society and government ; as the adequate instrument for the regeneration of the world ; as the sure salvation of all those who put their trust in it. Yes, it is the old Gospel, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that the world needs. It is a story of pathos unspeakable, of love most wondrous,—a story fraught with sweetest music to my ears. In the hours of my soul's need, tell me not of some new thing, but —

“Tell me the old, old story
Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory,
Of Jesus and his love.
Tell me the story simply,
As to a little child ;
For I am weak and weary
And helpless and defiled.

“Tell me the story slowly,
That I may take it in —
That wonderful redemption,
God's remedy for sin !
Tell me the story often,
For I forget so soon !
The ‘early dew’ of morning
Has passed away at noon !

“Tell me the story softly,
With earnest tones, and grave ;
Remember ! I'm the sinner
Whom Jesus came to save.
Tell me that story always
If you would really be
In any time of trouble —
A comforter to me.

“Tell me the same old story,
When you have cause to fear
That this world's empty glory
Is costing me too dear.
Yes, and when that world's glory
Is dawning on my soul,
Tell me the old, old story :
‘Christ Jesus makes thee whole,’ ”





REV. E. S. CHAPMAN, D. D.

TOO BUSY.

BY REV. E. S. CHAPMAN, D. D.

Delivered at the First Presbyterian Church, East Oakland, California.

*And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone.
1 Kings 20: 40.*

IT is not because we are too stupid, or too lazy, but because we are too busy, that we neglect life's most important duties. We are busy people, and we live in a busy age. Our almost measureless achievements do not keep pace with our desires and aspirations. Our fathers could ride contentedly in ox-carts, but we fret at the delays of the lightning express. We are doing many things all at once, and trying to do many more. "Careful and troubled about many things," we leave undone the things of greatest importance.

THE UNSAVED MAN is too busy with the things of this life to give attention to the things of the life to come; too busy in caring for his body to secure the salvation of his immortal soul; too busy with stocks and bonds and earthly goods to lay up for himself treasures in Heaven. He is not an idler.

Far from it. He is a most arduous toiler in life's tedious activities. He toils till he is weary, and toils when he should be at rest. Head and hand and heart are heavily taxed, and each responds to the call with hearty cheerfulness, and shrinks not from hardship or discouragement. He is also an effective toiler.

" Each morning sees some task begun,
Each evening sees its close."

He watches the seasons, the markets, and the indications of future demands and supplies. He sows at the best time, and reaps a plentiful harvest. He buys and sells wisely and receives large profits. He guards against calamity by prudent forethought, and mends every breach before serious evils are possible. In the brightness and beauty of the summer, he provides for the dreary and desolate winter; and while securely sheltered from the winter's storm, he prepares for the activities of milder days. It is his purpose to attend faithfully to all matters requiring his attention; he does not intend to neglect any. He does not mean to neglect his eternal interest; he has many times promised himself and others to speedily return to God, and secure eternal life—but he is so very busy! he has so much to do that the "one thing needful" is utterly neglected. And thus the years come and go, and he remains unsaved!

Such men are before me at this moment, and as they hear these words, they confess their application to themselves. They do not mean to be lost, but they are too busy to be saved,—too busy keeping above the waters to get into the life-boat and be borne safely beyond the destroying waves ; too busy watching the forked flames and curling smoke, to escape from the consuming fires ; too busy to be saved ! Only think of it ! Too busy to love and obey God ; too busy to love and trust the Lord Jesus Christ !

THE UNSAVED WOMAN is too much occupied with the cares of her home and family to make her peace with God and prepare for Heaven. With cooking and cleaning and mending, with nursing and teaching and governing, with calling and receiving and entertaining, with parties and balls and theaters—with all these and a thousand other kindred engagements and duties—how can she find time to be saved ? If she only had a little leisure—only a little release from these ceaseless calls of duty—she might give attention to the interests of her soul. But she is too busy ! Yes, a wife, a mother, a rational, intelligent woman is too busy to give attention to religion. She means to do it, but so many things crowd upon her attention and tax her energies, that days and weeks pass by, and weeks and months multiply into years, and Christ and Heaven are neglected. Her heart is

like the inn at Bethlehem, where there was "no room" for the infant Saviour. She would receive him, but there is "no room." She does not intend to reject him, but she "really cannot give attention to such matters." She is too busy! too busy to yield her affections to One who is "the fairest among ten thousand," and "altogether lovely."

CHRISTIAN PARENTS are many times too busy to attend to the religious instruction and training of their children. There was a time in human history when the head of the family was its priest, and religious instruction and religious services held the *first place* in every godly household. Nothing was permitted to crowd out family instruction and culture in the truth and service of God. It is no wonder that from such families there should arise characters like Moses, and Samuel, and John the Baptist, and Timothy. But in many homes of to-day the family altar is unknown, and careful, systematic instruction in divine truth is utterly neglected. Many children of professed Christian parents never heard the voice of either father or mother in prayer! Can this be true? Yes, O yes, sadly, deplorably true! Many who are now children in our Christian families will never be permitted in after years to rejoice in the strength which comes from early religious culture, nor call to remembrance the hallowed associations and influences of the family altar. They are being delib-

erately and cruelly robbed of their priceless heritage by those who are responsible for their existence in the world, and who have taken upon themselves the vows of Christian parentage.

No words can describe the losses they are thus sustaining. The sweet remembrances of home, with all its divine atmosphere, and its blissful experiences, are of more value to us in the struggles of life than all the mines of wealth and tomes of ancient lore. With such remembrances the child of parental faithfulness passes safely over raging seas, and through dark and stormy nights, and anchors at last securely in the harbor of endless rest. Why, then, should any professed Christian — knowing the fierceness of life's battle, and the value of religious instruction and culture in the days of childhood — why should any Christian father or mother fail to afford their children this great blessing? Do they not love their children? Certainly they do. No one would question that. Have they not engaged to rear them "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"? They have, in the most solemn and impressive services of God's house. Are not family worship and religious instruction included in the baptismal obligations of Christian parents? Unquestionably they are, and are so regarded by those who assume the solemn obligations of Christian parentage.

Why, then, are there so many Christian homes

without a family altar, and so many professed Christian parents who never pray with or instruct their children in Bible truth? Why is it? *They are too busy!* Fathers are in too great haste to reach the place of business or of labor, to begin the day upon their knees before a Throne of grace, and they are too weary at night, or subject to too many interruptions, to close the day with fitting family devotions. Mothers are so sorely pressed with cares and labors that they do not attend to these important matters; and besides, the children are so busy with their studies, or with the claims of society, or with some plans of pleasure, that worship and religious culture are crowded out! Too busy for family worship! Too busy to instruct their own offspring in the way of life and salvation! *Only once* — and for so short a time — is the child in the parents' hands "as clay in the hands of the potter," and then those parents are too busy with other and minor matters, to mould and shape their characters for Heaven and eternal joy! I do not say with whom, of those who hear me, this is the case; God knows, and so do you.

MANY SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS are too busy to make the necessary preparation for their great work. It is not because they have been idle during the days and nights of the week that they are so poorly prepared to instruct those under their care in the Sunday-school. They have not been

idle ; they have been busy ; busy with a thousand cares and duties which have occupied their time and crowded out interest in the Sunday-school lesson. Hence they appear before their classes unprepared to instruct them in the word of eternal truth, and lead them to Jesus, or build them up in Him. They are sadly conscious of their weakness, and, in a measure, realize their own fault in the matter. It was not their purpose to neglect such a sacred trust, but other things have received their attention and this has been crowded out. There are others who devote so much attention to the *letter* of the word, that its *spirit* is almost wholly neglected. Facts and names and dates and texts are memorized and drilled upon, and the heart of the scholar remains untouched, and the soul unsaved. Plans to secure regularity and punctuality of attendance and commendable deportment in school, tax heart and brain to the exclusion of prayer and effort to win the heart to the Saviour, and build up a noble Christian character. Too busy with the *means* to give attention to the *end*.

MANY CHRISTIAN WORKERS are so busy with the work of sociables, entertainments, and lectures that they forget that all this is only to win souls to Christ, and to build up His kingdom in the hearts of men. Far be it from me to speak any word or cherish any thought in disparagement of these, or

of their arduous labor of love. Let my right hand forget her cunning, before I forget or fail to appreciate the wearisome services of those who are engaged in these activities of the church. But I must be faithful to warn as well as to commend and encourage ; and there is very great danger of utterly losing sight of, and interest in, the real end and purpose of our efforts, in our most enthusiastic use of the means to that end. We may lose all true spirituality while we are wearing ourselves out in church services.

We may be so very busy, even with what we call church work, that we neglect our own spiritual culture and growth in grace. We may be working so hard for the church that we forget to read and study the holy Scriptures, and neglect secret prayer. We may be too busy in minor matters to attend to matters of greatest moment. Too busy to secure the rest which will enable us to be early at the house of God, and wakeful during the hour of worship. Too busy to attend the prayer-meeting. At the lodge, and the meeting of the building association ; at the political meeting ; at the concert ; but too busy to attend the service of prayer. Not too good, or too bad to be there, but actually too busy. Too busy to visit that sick neighbor, though weeks have passed since he or she was shut up in that dark room of pain and peril. Too busy to call upon those strangers who

have moved into the house just across the way. They may be church people, and they may not; you ought to know about this, and know if those precious children attend Sabbath-school or church. You have intended to call, but have been too busy. Too busy to form the acquaintance and gain the confidence of that young man just from the country, though you were told of his coming to the city, and said you would hunt him up. Too busy greeting your next-door neighbor, or some other well-known friend who sits near you in church, to speak to those strangers who have ventured into the house of God. You were not indifferent to their presence; you were all alive with interest, but you were busy. Too busy in thinking of the artistic rendering of that sacred song, to pray and strive that it might reach the heart of some poor, perishing sinner! And, because you are thus occupied and interested, that song which might have been attended by divine power, becomes as a "sounding brass or a clanging cymbal."

And this may be true of every feature of church service, and of all classes of church workers.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER may be too busy to do any effective work for Christ. Too busy in striving to tickle the public ear to think of the sad and sinful one who is perhaps hearing his last sermon. Too busy striving for his own glory, to glorify his Lord and Master. Too busy with social engage-

ments to be able to bring beaten oil into the sanctuary of God. Too busy visiting and nurturing mature members of the church to be able to visit the unsaved and win them to the Saviour. Too busy, perhaps, in seeking to keep the church in harmony, to have time to nourish and shepherd the lambs of the fold, and build them up into vigorous Christian life. Too busy with those who are saved, to have time or ability to save those who are lost. Too busy in building a new church, and in planning and soliciting, and praying for success, to be able to secure a revival of religion, and the salvation of perishing multitudes all around him. O righteous God, can this be so? Those whom thou hast sent to rescue the perishing, too busy with other matters to be successful in that great work?

“As thy servant was busy here and there, *he was gone!*” Yes, while we are thus busy, the opportunity passes forever away. The blessed Saviour turns away from the heart at which He has so long and so patiently lingered. Lovingly did He plead for admittance; faithfully did He disclose His bleeding wounds and proffer His divine mercy; but all in vain, for other guests were receiving attention, and the needy soul remained in darkness and sin, too busy to hear and heed the calls of salvation. Until His locks were wet with the dews of the night, He tarried and sought admittance to the heart, but now He is gone, and the offers of salvation are

closed. Do you wonder that He goes? Do you not rather wonder that He tarries so long? Are you not filled with amazement that He has not long since turned forever away from you?

“ Behold a stranger at the door,
He gently knocks, has knocked before.
Has waited long, is waiting still,
You treat no other friend so ill.
O let the dear Saviour come in,
He'll cleanse thy heart from sin,
O keep Him no more, out at the door,
But let the dear Saviour come in.”

Soon, ah, soon He will be gone! He surely will not linger to be treated thus. If you are too busy to be saved, when He freely offers you salvation, what will you receive when He is busy with those who desire salvation? And the tender, inquiring boy who waited for your smiles and yielded to your influence—is gone. While you were too busy to mould and fashion him for Christ, he has gradually slipped out of your grasp, and he will never again be the tender, susceptible boy he once was. That boy is gone; gone up into riper years, and greater strength of character and will. You were then too busy to teach him the way of life, he is now too busy to be taught. And those boys and girls who now gladden your hearts and brighten your homes, will all soon be gone. They are even now going out into the fierce battle of life; into the fearful

conflict with the powers of darkness. The members of your Sunday-school class will also soon be gone. Some have already passed away, grown out of your reach, or gone into eternity.

And that sick neighbor has gone. He lingered long, but death came at last and took him beyond your reach. While you were too busy to seek to point him to the Friend of sinners, death was very busy removing him beyond the offers of salvation.

And that young man from the country has gone. The emissaries of Satan were very busy initiating him into the ways of vice, while professed Christians were too busy to win him to the Saviour.

Your unsaved neighbor, your father, your husband, your son or daughter,—are they gone? Has your opportunity with them passed away?

They may not all be reached, even if we do our whole duty. But minor matters must not be permitted to so occupy our thoughts and affections, to so tax our efforts, as to leave the stain of their blood upon our garments. And this need not be. There are no conflicts between human duties. The strictest faithfulness to every religious duty and trust detracts from no proper service or effort in life. Every duty is a religious duty. All things should be done for the glory of God, and if this be our aim and effort, we will always find time and inclination to do that which is of greatest importance to His cause and kingdom. But we are too

prone to permit even trivial matters to crowd out of our thoughts matters of supreme importance. We do not mean to be unfaithful to any trust, or neglectful of any duty, but we become so absorbed in what we are doing, so interested and engaged, that we do not hear the calls to higher duties, or, hearing, we do not heed them.

Willie was a very kind and obedient boy, whom his mother left at home one day, to take charge of his little flaxen-haired sister. Many were his earnest promises that not for one instant would he permit her to be out of his sight, but at length he became so absorbed in mending his kite that he did not notice that his little charge had wandered out upon the porch at the rear of the house. Presently he heard her calling, "Oh, Willie, come here quick." "Wait a minute, darling," was his tender reply, "brother is very busy." It was only a few minutes until his work was done, but his little sister was gone, and her little hat lying at an open cistern, explained her earnest call for her brother.

"Willie, my darling boy, what is the matter? where is your little sister?" "O mamma, I was so busy mending my kite that I did not miss her until she had fallen into the cistern and was drowned."

"Father, mother, Sunday-school teacher, Christian worker, minister of the gospel, where are those intrusted to your care?" "O blessed Master, we have been so very busy making money, attending

to the claims of society, preparing fine discourses — so very busy that we have forgotten them, and they have fallen into ruin and are lost !”

What do you think of Willie, my beloved hearers ? He did not mean to be unfaithful. Neither do we. He was not idle nor stupid, he was only very busy. So are we. He ought to have been busy. So ought we. He ought not to have been so absorbed in a trivial matter like mending a kite, as to be unfaithful to such a sacred trust. Neither ought we. His was a very sacred trust. Ours is far more sacred. His unfaithfulness caused a very great loss, and a most grievous sorrow. Ours may result in infinitely greater evil. He was only a little boy. We are mature men and women — Christian men and women. His opportunity was passed. Ours is not. Let us work “while it is day ; the night cometh, when no man can work.”



REV. NG POON CHEW.

THE CHINESE IN SAN FRANCISCO.

BY REV. NG POON CHEW.

An address delivered at a Christian Convention in San Francisco, September, 1892.

SINCE the passage of the series of anti-Chinese acts by the United States government, the number of Chinese in this country has been steadily and considerably reduced. Once there were from twenty-five to thirty thousand Chinese in this city ; now there are somewhat less than fifteen thousand.

They are found in nearly every trade, working industriously and patiently for their livelihood ; saving what they can, often very little, to send back home for the support of their dependent relatives. As a class, the Chinese hate to be idle ; they must and will work whether they earn much or little.

In their lodgings they are generally dirty, as one will see when he takes a walk through China-town ; but in their persons they are comparatively clean. They are living closely together on account of the high rent of rooms in that quarter.

The Chinese are very superstitious. They are so brought up from their childhood. From their standpoint, they are religious, especially their

women. There is not a heathen home in China-town which does not contain a number of altars dedicated to the worship of their numerous gods and departed friends. They have about fifteen public temples among them, of different sizes, which are supported by their pious patrons. The temple keeper has to pay a large sum of money into the treasury of the temple before he can take charge of it; and he gets his return by compelling every worshiper to buy offerings from him alone, for which he charges an exorbitant price.

Theoretically, there are two distinct religious sects in China-town, Buddhist and Taoist; the former came from India, the latter is of native origin. But practically there is only one mixed religion. They do not draw any distinction now; one may be at the same time a follower of Confucius, a believer in Buddhism, and an adherent of Taoism.

All the Chinese sincerely believe in the immortality of the soul, and future reward and punishment according to deeds done in this life; but, alas, they do not seem to make any preparation for that life or to make any effort to seek out the way to escape that punishment, while living. They are either ignorant as to the way of preparation or indifferent to their native convictions.

They make offerings to the dead, periodically, both at home and at the grave, in the form of meat,

paper clothing, and money, believing that the spirits of the dead need these as well as the living. In accordance with this belief, the Chinese always take the remains of their dead friends with them back to China so they can worship them there.

The Chinese are great lovers of games, either for pleasure or money. It is very hard to keep them from gambling. There are many gambling places among them, but not as many as there used to be. If the officers would do their duty, these could be stopped.

The highbinder societies are formed for mutual protection and blackmailing purposes. There are many of them in the Chinese quarter. Nearly all the crimes committed in that quarter are done by the members of these infernal societies, who are enabled to escape justice by the laxness of American laws, and unprincipled lawyers. Such societies could not so openly exist for a day in China ; every member would be immediately beheaded when caught, and no mercy would ever be shown to such miserable wretches under the Chinese laws.

The Chinese, as a race, have very little appetite for liquor ; very few, if any, ever get drunk. I have never seen a drunken Chinaman in all my life. Though the Chinese do not use liquor to any extent, they have a substitute for it, namely, opium, which is very murderous to the Chinese. It is the devil's curse and device for creating misery. In

my humble opinion, it is as bad as whisky in this land ; but some say it is not. Well, in one sense, perhaps, it is not so bad, because when a drunken white man comes home, he abuses his children and kicks his wife, but when a Chinese opium fiend comes home, his wife kicks him, which is much better.

This very day there are from eight to ten million human wretches in China, smoking this poisonous drug ; and there are more than sixty million living souls suffering directly and indirectly from the use of this infernal extract. It is used among all classes and sexes ; you can point them out by their consumptive appearance.

O how many bright and promising young men, the only joy, hope, and comfort of their aged parents, have been wrecked and hastened to an untimely grave by the use of this drug !

After one has acquired the habit of using opium, there is very little hope for his reform ; he goes on from bad to worse, until he is unfit for any vocation. He requires more time to smoke and to sleep off its effect, than to work.

But how came opium to be among the Chinese ? Did our land first produce it ? or did we, the Chinese, invent it ?—No, no ! ten thousand times, no ! It was produced by the Christian English in India, and forced upon us heathen Chinese with powder

and balls, killing us by the thousands, and ruining us by the millions with its poison.

Our good and beloved emperor made no resistance but was overcome by the superior forces of the English, and compelled to let his country be overflowed with this death-dealing drug. And then he exclaimed at the close of the opium war, "I know this will kill my poor people by the millions,—my poor people, my poor children!" Poor man! he did fully see its deadly effect before he died; for his own son was among the first victims of opium; and O, what a field of blood and what a world of iniquity will be revealed before the judgment-seat of God, to those men, who, to satisfy their own selfish end, forced this curse upon our country.

The English government opium factories in India are producing a fearful amount of this drug every year. They ship about eleven million pounds to China annually—enough to kill every human being in all Asia and Europe, if taken internally.

If it were not for the devilish actions of the English government, we would be to-day free from this vice, and you would not read in your daily papers about the opium dens and opium fiends among us.

As the time allotted me is limited, I do not wish to go on any longer with this mournful tale of

the dire consequences of opium ; for they will only shock your feelings, although not half has been told. God only knows all the sad details.

Let us now take a glance at the bright and hopeful side, and see what the Church of Christ has done for the Chinese here.

The Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Baptist, the Congregational, and the Episcopalian churches, are carrying on good and successful work among them. There are schools connected with mission churches, day schools for children and women, where English and Chinese are taught ; and evening schools for men, where English alone is taught. There are now about three hundred Christian Chinese in San Francisco who are leading a life consistent with their profession. This number does not represent all that have been converted by these missions since their first operation ; for some have gone home to their newly found Saviour, and many have left here for their native land, where they are now preaching the glad tidings of the Gospel to their fellow-men by words and by deeds.

Many things have to be overcome and endured before a Chinaman can be a Christian. He has to discard all the former beliefs and superstitions and ancestral worship which every Chinaman holds dear ; and in addition he has to suffer ill-treatment and separation from his former friends and relatives.

The converts here are striving very hard for the conversion of their countrymen in China. They are not only waiting but also working anxiously for the fulfillment of that prophecy in Isaiah, "Behold, these shall come from far ; and, lo, these from the north, and from the west ; and these from the land of SINIM."

They have founded different missionary societies, and pledged to give so much each month to support the native missionaries employed by them in China, and they have also raised large sums of money to build churches in different districts of Canton Province. Several churches have been already built and supported wholly by the Christian Chinese in this country.

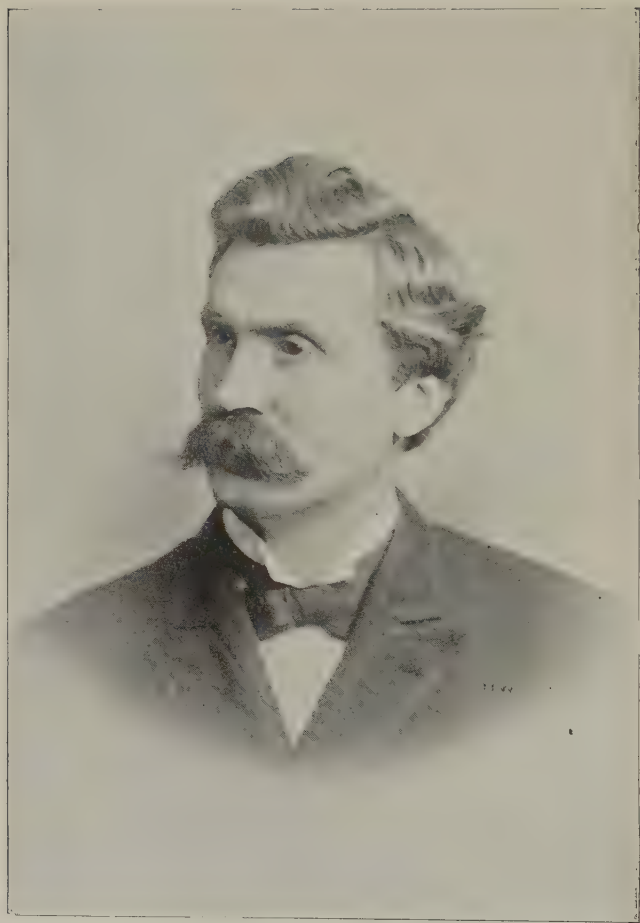
There cannot be more earnestness, pleasure, and self-denial manifested anywhere than at the mission meetings when discussing the building of new churches in China. Every one present would give encouragement, not only with words but also with money. Some would stand up and pledge their help by giving a whole month's wages ; some would pledge two months', and some even three months' wages.

The Christian Chinamen, converted in this country, who go back to China, are among the best, the most faithful, patient, consistent, and energetic Christians to be found anywhere.

The conversion of the Chinese in this country is

a great factor toward the conversion of China. Therefore the churches should do their duty more earnestly and faithfully in converting these strangers in their midst.

So, friends, come and help us, and the cause of Christ among us, with your fervent prayers, with the wealth God has given you, and with your sympathy, that all of us from the land of Sinim may be instructed in the knowledge of Christ, and with gladness serve the God you adore.



REV. R. F. COYLE, D. D.

WHAT CHRIST TEACHES US TO BELIEVE ABOUT THE BIBLE.

BY REV. R. F. COYLE, D. D.,

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Oakland, California.

Making the word of God of none effect, through your tradition, which ye have delivered. Mark 7 : 13.

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Luke 24 : 44.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets ; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Matt. 5 : 17, 18.

THE battle for the truth never ceases to rage. For those who are in earnest there is no discharge in that war. The contestants are always in the field, and the fight is always on. They change their tactics and shift their positions from time to time, but there is no surcease of conflict. A few years ago the tides of battle surged about the Christ. The best scholarship and the keenest criticism of the century were enlisted, and when the atmosphere cleared as the struggle subsided,

there He stood, as always, mighty to save, the Wonderful, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

To-day the Bible is the center around which the contest gathers. The rattle of intellectual artillery is heard all along the line, and splendid flashes of rhetorical fireworks disturb the sky. Even our secular papers have taken sides, and, as usual, have decided the matter with characteristic dispatch. It would be amusing, perhaps, if it were not so absurd, to see with what an infallible air they dispose of the most serious problems that can engage the thought of man. In this case, as might have been expected, their conclusions are in favor of the critics, who, in dealing with the Bible, use the penknife of Jehudi. As to the issue of the battle we have no doubt whatever. The Book will stand in its integrity. It is an anvil that has worn out a great many hammers. It will come out of this, as it has come out of every previous fire of conflict, unscathed and entire, not weakened, but strengthened and glorified by the ordeal. In the meanwhile it will serve to plant our feet more squarely on the Rock, and give firmer fiber to our faith to turn from men and warring schools to see what Jesus Christ teaches us to believe about the Book.

Before proceeding to this, however, it may be well to ask whether Christ is a competent judge in

this case? Is He by grasp of mind, by spiritual insight, by purity of life, and poise of character, qualified to sit in judgment upon the Book which we regard as Holy Writ? To ask the question is to answer it. The marvelous reach of His intellect is everywhere seen in His words and sayings. His mind penetrated at once to the very heart of things and seized upon ultimate principles. To be impressed with the unapproachable quality of His mental caliber it is only necessary to study His answers to certain questions that were put to Him. These answers were, in every case, extemporaneous, unpremeditated, but they were so complete, so crushing, so profound, and yet so plain and pointed, that they effectually silenced His enemies, and those enemies were among the keenest and most able men of their day. For three years they exercised all their ingenuity to entangle Him; they brought forward every difficulty they could think of in the Scriptures, but His replies were so clear, so convincing, so severe upon themselves, that it is said, "They durst not any more ask Him any questions."

No matter how high, no matter how deep, the ethical problem, Jesus was at home in it. He dealt with it like one who saw it in all its bearings, near and remote. He had read the Scriptures, and read human life, and penetrated both to the very core. His power of condensation was super-

human. He could crowd a whole world of truth into a little sentence of a few simple words. Now all this means transcendent, intellectual force.

As to His *spiritual insight* I need not trouble you to speak a word. Every reader of the Gospels knows how He saw into the very depths. When He turned to the law and the prophets, He saw not the letter, not books and chapters, but the spiritual truth behind. So in reading human life. He saw at once the motive, the spirit by which men were actuated, and not that which was external and mechanical.

And where else will you find such moral integrity? His life has been scrutinized for nineteen centuries by friends and foes alike, and not a flaw has ever yet been detected. "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" His own challenge to the Scribes and Pharisees has never yet been answered. Out of all the fires of criticism, out of the crucible of ages of intense investigation, that life has come, unsullied as a sunbeam, pure as the great white Throne. To all this add the fact of His perfect poise of character, His evenness of temper in every storm that beat about Him, His calmness and patience under abuse, the absolute impartiality of His judgment, and I think you will agree with me that He is abundantly qualified to teach us concerning the Bible. We are prepared, therefore, to sit at His feet to learn what He has to say about the Book.

At the outset, then, He teaches us to believe that the *Bible is the word of God*. He so characterizes the entire Old Testament. He sharply rebukes the Scribes and Pharisees for making the word of God of none effect through their traditions, and by that word is clearly meant the Holy Scriptures, so far as they were then written. He never questioned the sacred oracles, as He had learned them in the home of Joseph and Mary. He lived in them. He taught them. He bowed before their divine authority. He confounded the Pharisees and silenced the Sadducees by quoting from Moses; and, in John 10:35, making the word of God synonymous with Scripture, He solemnly declares that the Scripture cannot be broken. It is the fashion now-a-days, in certain quarters, to rule out some of the alleged writings of Moses, which comprise the first five books of the Bible, as not being part of the inspired record; but Jesus quotes from every one of them, and always as the word of God. So, also, he quotes from Samuel, from Kings, from Chronicles, from the Psalms, from the prophets, and puts them in the same category as belonging to the word of God. Now, Jesus had studied these writings profoundly in His Nazareth home. He had brought to bear upon them all of His peerless powers, and mastered them, as His facility in quotation shows. Hence he must have known whether they were true or false, and especially, since He was the Son of God. But if they

are false, if they are not the word of God, could He have given them His unqualified endorsement consistently with His pure and holy life? Would a person of such exalted character have resorted to the poor trick of quoting from spurious scriptures to fortify His own claims? Would He, who calls Himself the Truth, and who has a right to that pre-eminence, have put His *imprimatur* upon documents which were counterfeit? To me at least, such a thing seems not only incredible, but absurd, and I leave the critics to wrestle with it, while I stand with Jesus Christ. What He quotes as the word of God I believe that you and I are warranted in fearlessly quoting as the word of God, also.

He does not teach any particular theory of inspiration. He does not tell us how these writings of Moses and the prophets were inspired, whether by dictation or illumination, or a certain superintendency which saved the authors from error, or whether the gold was supplied by the Holy Spirit, and the moulds by man. All such nice questions as these were left to human wisdom. He simply tells us that these Scriptures are the word of God, and His teaching ought to have its proper weight. He claims divine inspiration for His own words. Thus: "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's, who sent me." And in like manner He teaches us the inspiration of the Apostles. He

promises them the Spirit, who, He declares, will "guide then into all truth," and "bring all things to their remembrance." Hence He teaches us to believe that both the Old and New Testaments are the word of God.

Passing from this, let me ask you to notice in the next place that he *makes himself the center upon which all lines of Holy Writ converge*. In John 5: 39, he says of the Scriptures: "These are they which *testify of me*." And in the 46th verse of the same chapter He speaks as follows: "For if ye believed Moses ye would believe me, for he *wrote of me*." Again, in the 24th of Luke, beginning at the 44th verse, he says to his Apostles: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, *concerning me*. Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." This is certainly remarkable language. Remember that it comes from the lips of the Son of God. He calmly and deliberately puts Himself forward as constituting the very sum and substance of law and prophecy and psalm. In terms too

plain to be misunderstood He affirms that the Scriptures bear "one common, supreme testimony, not to a shadowy hope, not to a mere human postulate of faith, but to a Person, the Saviour, who should live and die and rise again for the salvation of man," and that Saviour is Himself.

Thus the Word of God is a wondrous house of many mansions, of which Christ is the key. Without Him its treasures are locked up, they are hidden, and no human ingenuity can steal its way into their untold wealth. With Him every door in its sixty-six apartments can be opened and their precious contents brought to light. Apart from Him the Bible is a sealed book. Its types, its symbols, its sacrifices, its prophecies, and many of its historic allusions are incomprehensible. They are like the hieroglyphics on some ancient obelisk. They evidently mean something, but, without the key, nobody can tell what. So, without Christ, the Word of God is beyond our ken. We have types with no answering antitype. Shadows pointing to no explanatory light, hints of a Coming One that only mock and baffle the searcher after truth, prophecies that never issue in fulfillment. Many a devout student has found that he could make nothing out of these Scriptures until he began their interpretation from Christ as the center. As soon as he did that, he was amazed and delighted to see how the

Book yielded up its secrets and how the light fell upon its dark places. It used to be said in olden times that every road led to Rome ; and it is true now, and always, that every pathway in Holy Writ, whether marked out by Moses or the prophets, finds its center and terminus in Jesus Christ. So He taught Himself, and the lesson cannot be too thoroughly written upon our hearts. The scientific student who should undertake to interpret the Mississippi Valley with the Father of Waters left out, would have a task no more difficult, to say the least, than would the student who should try to understand the Bible with the Lord Jesus left out. He is as essential to a correct knowledge of the drift and purpose of the Bible as Hamlet is to a correct conception of the great tragedy that bears his name.

Moreover, by *His own example*, he teaches us to rest calmly and confidently on the written and indestructible Word of God. His own attitude toward this book shows more forcibly than any words could, the estimate He puts upon it. His utterances standing alone, unsupported by His example, would have little or no weight ; not enough, certainly, to be convincing. But He practiced what He preached. If He taught others to confide in the Book, He did so Himself most implicitly. If He spoke of the Book with the utmost assurance,

He trusted it with the utmost assurance. Here, as everywhere, there is no disparity between His sayings and doings.

In the wilderness, when the tempter came and exercised all his ingenuity to poison His mind with doubt; when he came with his mouth filled with *ifs*, did Jesus stop to parley? Did He argue? Did He take refuge in His wit or His genius? Not for a moment. But He said, "It is written." He said it three several times, and each time with keener accent. He met the enemy with no untempered blade, but with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. To beat him, and scathe him, and hurl him back, He laid hold of this battery of heaven and plucked the lightning from the skies. There was no questioning the justice of the fearful struggle. His energies were not allowed to evaporate in vague wondering as to why it was thus and so. He simply threw Himself back upon the Word, and there He rested in calm acquiescence with the will of His Father.

Again, when a certain lawyer came inquiring what he should do to inherit eternal life, Jesus did not depend upon His own skill and cleverness for an answer. He referred him to the Word, and said, "How readest thou?" The lawyer quoted the well-known passage about love to God and love to man, and Jesus said, "Thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live." Scripture was

to Him the answer to all questions, the solution of all problems bearing upon man's relation to his neighbor and his God.

In the most solemn hours of His life, in His conflicts, His trials, His sufferings, the written Word was ever on His lips. He said repeatedly that things turned out so and so in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. And when the final storm gathered about Him and culminated on the Cross, He rested His soul on that Word "amid the cyclone of death," and the last sayings He uttered, as He hung upon the tree, were quotations from the Psalms. If, therefore, the testimony of Jesus, embodied both in speech and example, is to be relied upon, the Scriptures are the Word of God. If we believe Him we must believe them. This assertion will bear investigation, and I commend it to your most careful and candid consideration.

Not only, however, does He assure us that the Scriptures are the Word of God, and that He is their central theme, but that *they are to stand*. In His Sermon on the Mount He says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." With still warmer emphasis, if possible, He declares in Luke 16:17: "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one

tittle of the law to fail." He was not afraid that the Book would become obsolete and perish. He was not afraid that the world would outgrow it, and the wisdom of man supersede it. He took it up reverently, and, looking at it, He said, "This Book is to abide. Think not that it will ever vanish away and be forgotten," and His faith in its staying qualities ought to strengthen ours.

When the Emperor of Rome was being ferried across a certain stormy water, the boatman became pale with fright. He thought they were going to be swallowed up by the wave, but the Emperor inspired him with courage by saying: "Fear not, you carry Cæsar." So, though the storms may rage around it and threaten to engulf, this boat of Holy Writ will ride the billow and outlive the tempest, for it carries the Son of God, whose hand is on the storm.

Out from the Cape of Good Hope there runs into the sea a dangerous bar some forty or fifty miles in length. The water, we are told, sweeps around it with a tremendous swell, making navigation extremely perilous at certain seasons of the year. Around this cape an East Indiaman, called the *Lady Holland*, was fighting her way in the year 1830, bound for Hindoostan. For days and days clouds filled the sky. Again and again the vessel was beaten out of her course. Soundings were taken, and the captain found that the ship was

over the bar. Realizing the peril of her position, he was just about to give orders to turn about. But it was too late. With an awful crash she struck. Her back was broken, and her forepart sank in the wild breakers. As Providence would have it, however, all on board escaped to a little patch of land amid the rocks. Among them was a young man from Scotland by the name of Alexander Duff. He was going out as a missionary to India. While the shipwrecked passengers were huddled together for shelter in a wretched little hovel, a sailor, walking along the beach, found a Bible cast up high and dry. He opened it, and found Alexander Duff's name distinctly written in it. Out of a library of 800 volumes which he was taking to India it was the only one saved. What is still more singular, it had been packed with the other books, but had been carefully wrapped in chamois skin, and was not even injured. He took the book, and to the drenched and shivering passengers read the 107th Psalm.

The incident made a profound and lasting impression on the young man's mind. He took it as the voice of Providence declaring that the Bible is the supreme book for India and for mankind. But the significant part of the story for us is the striking illustration it gives us of the history of the Bible, the experiences through which it has come, the storms which it has outlived. To wreck it, to de-

stroy it, has been impossible. Men like Gibbon, and Hume, and Voltaire, and Paine, and Ingersoll have turned all the artillery of their wit, their satire, their ridicule and their eloquence upon it, but still it stands, as Jesus said. To refute it, to prove it unreliable, travelers have searched the ruins of ancient cities, like Volney, and mighty scholars have ransacked history and science, but still it stands. To undermine it and gainsay its claims, geologists have dugged into the bowels of the earth, and astronomers have delved among the stars, but still it stands. About fifty years ago the higher critics began their attacks. They assaulted it here and assaulted it there, now in the Old Testament and now in the New, and their assaults have been kept up and multiplied from year to year; but still it stands. The half century in which it has sustained the most determined and skillful assaults has been precisely the half century of its greatest triumphs.

Since John wrote on lonely Patmos, and Paul wrote in his "own hired house" in Rome, the whole face of the world has been changed, turned upside down, empires have fallen and empires have risen, science and philosophy have changed front again and again, and hoary systems have dropped from behind the curtains of the past, but the Bible stands. Not one jot or tittle of God's Word has passed away. Jesus said it would

abide, and He knew what He was talking about. What He says is worth believing. Celsus was famous once, Voltaire was famous once, Bolingbroke was famous once. When they opened their mouths, it was as though Sir Oracle had spoken. But where are their books to-day? They are either long ago out of print, or feeding the moth on dusty shelves, or forming buttresses from which the deft spider suspends his web, but the Bible stands, and was never so widely known, or so deeply loved, or so devoutly studied, or so mighty in power as in this year of grace 1893.

Many of the interpretations put upon it by schools and commentators are passing away, but we need not weep over that. Who cares for the scaffolding so long as the building remains? Let it go if its work is done. The building will look better and be better without it. Interpretations are not sacred. Interpretations are not inspired. The scaffolding is useful, but it does not belong to the architect's plan. Interpretations are going. They have gone in the past, and they will go in the future, but what of that, so long as the Book interpreted abides? When the rain comes, and the water pours in torrents along the streets, you are not afraid that your houses are going to be washed away. The filth will go, the rubbish will go, all unnecessary accumulations will go, but you are glad of that, for it will leave things cleaner and

more wholesome. So these showers of investigation, and these torrents of criticism that are falling upon the Book will, no doubt, sweep away some old interpretations which we have loved and to which we have clung, but they will leave, not a mutilated Bible, not a fragmentary Bible, but the complete Bible, as we now have it, more perfectly understood and more highly prized than ever.

We need have no fears for the Book, fellow-men. It will stand, for Jesus said so. It can never die, for He, its heart, its life, is immortal. It will be opposed, it will be attacked with growing fierceness as its victories multiply, but, like the birds which beat themselves to death against the glass globes that surround the electric lights of the city, those who assault it will be flung back defeated, baffled, while it shines on with brightening ray as the night of time wears toward eternal dawn.



REV. ARTHUR CROSBY, A. M.

THE SURE FOUNDATION, AND ITS SEAL.

BY REV. ARTHUR CROSBY A. M.,

Late Pastor First Presbyterian Church, San Rafael, and now Principal
Mt. Tamalpais Military Academy.

*Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having
this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. 2 Tim.
2: 19.*

ACCORDING to the teaching of Christ and of the apostles, there are but two classes of human beings,—those who serve God, and those who serve Him not; the citizens of heaven and the citizens of the world; the saved and the lost.

This distinction the Scriptures insist upon as being real, vital, essential. All other principles of classification are represented as unimportant and superficial. Differences of wealth, of education, of race, of color—national and social distinctions—are of no account compared with this division between saints and sinners, between the friends of God and the enemies of God. This, I say, is the clear, distinct, oft-repeated teaching of the Bible. Indeed, it is upon this theory that Christianity exists in the world.

Theoretically the church is organized with sole reference to this distinction. The design is that all those, and only those who are God's friends should be in the church, while all those, and only those who are against God should be regarded as belonging to the world. Practically, however, and as a matter of fact, the church contains many who are not the Lord's servants, while many who do really love and serve Him are still in the ranks of the unconverted and unbelieving multitude. But this failure of the church to reach its ideal, does not interfere with the reality of the distinction which the Bible teaches—for "the *Lord* knoweth them that are his." It is not given to you or me, or to any man, or any body of men to decide who are the Lord's and who are not. No session or church court, no bishop or house of bishops can determine to which class this or that man belongs. Nevertheless, the two classes exist; and though *we* may not discriminate between them, surely the Searcher of Hearts, He to whom all secrets are open, is not liable to be mistaken in His judgment. Surely "the *Lord* knoweth them that are his."

Now let us notice more particularly the principle upon which this classification proceeds. Let us try to discover what, according to the Bible, is the essential distinction between the saint and the sinner. And it is especially important in these days to get at that *essential* distinction, and to

have a clear idea of the *real difference* between the two classes, because, as civilization advances, and as social life becomes Christianized, the external and apparent marks of this distinction become obscured or even obliterated.

Christianity is constantly exerting a powerful influence upon the communities in which it has a foothold, even upon those persons in the community who do not acknowledge its divine authority, or accept its spiritual truths. Many of the blessings of the religion of Christ are enjoyed by those even who scoff at its claims and utterly refuse to have anything to do with the church which represents it. In spite of themselves, they feel and exhibit the indirect effects of its principles and its teachings, so that they become moral and law-abiding, and even virtuous and charitable. They are good husbands, and faithful wives, and affectionate parents, and excellent citizens, and kindly neighbors; and their godless lives are adorned with many attractive and graceful forms of refinement. The consequence is, that in such a state of society, where the *outward and visible signs* of distinction between the Christian and the man of the world are lost, the notion is apt to prevail, both in the church and in the world, that there *is* no such distinction.

Then the spiritual vitality of the church is sapped, and the impression grows that religion is no better

than respectable morality, and worship becomes a mere form. And so, after a time, the *fountain* of spiritual influence being dried, the community relapses into the condition which is natural to *godless* humanity, and the worst vices and immoralities begin to appear.

Now, I say, it is of vast importance that we should emphasize and insist upon the reality of this division of the whole race into two classes. We should never lose sight of this great fact, of which the Bible makes so much ; for our earnestness and our success in carrying forward the Lord's work depend largely upon our conviction of its truth. But in order that we may realize the fact ourselves, or convince others of its reality, we must not put the distinction on any false basis, and above all we must not refer it to anything that is external ; for as we have seen, all external marks of difference may fail, and so our sense of the distinction be lost, for even Satan himself can *appear* as an angel of light. What, then, is the principle of division ?

According to the uniform and consistent teaching of Scripture *the distinction turns solely upon the attitude of the soul toward God, our Creator.* Those who believe that God *is*, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, and who, thus believing, exercise toward Him feelings of love and reverence ; recognizing his influence

in their lives, trusting in His fatherly mercy, and striving to obey His commands,—all who occupy *this* attitude are God's friends ; they belong to the company of the saved. In Scripture language, they are the saints.

On the other hand, those who refuse or neglect to bring the thought of God's authority and love into their lives ; those who forget God ; those who do not order their lives with reference to the divine will ; who do not practically believe in Him, and therefore do not diligently seek Him,—all who are thus standing with *their backs toward God*, no matter how irreproachable their conduct may be, are his enemies—they are unsaved, they are distinctively sinners. Here, then, in the attitude of the soul toward God, we find the crucial test according to which the dividing line is drawn.

Thus, we read in the Psalms, “The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is *no fear of God* before his eyes.” And in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apostle warns us, “Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, *in departing from the living God*.” And in the Epistle to the Ephesians, he speaks of those who have no hope, as being “*without God* in the world.” So, on the other hand, we are told that “the Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth ;” and again, “Behold, the eye of the Lord

is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy." And the Apostle Peter declares, "Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that *feareth him*, and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." And Paul, quoting the words of the prophet Joel, asserts, "Whosoever shall *call upon the name of the Lord* shall be saved."

The same thing is evident when we examine the Scripture biographies. The elect, the saved, are those who "walk with God" like Enoch and Noah. Abraham, who believes God and lives in the fear of him, is called "*the friend of God.*" Jacob, though a man of many faults, and having many mean and selfish traits, yet holds fast to the God of his Father, and yields to His training, and so is known as Israel "a prince with God." Moses hearkens to the divine voice, and prefers affliction with God's people to all the riches of *godless* Egypt; and Moses is called emphatically "*the man of God.*" David, in spite of weakness and sin, returns yet again to the Lord after every fall, and carries through all the vicissitudes of his eventful life a strong confidence in the goodness of God, and an honest purpose to serve Him; and so David is styled "the man after God's own heart."

Thus we have as the distinguishing characteristic of the "saints," as that which entitles them to be called "saints," the recognition of the one Holy and Supreme God, and the loving submission of the

life to Him. Those who hold this spiritual attitude toward the Creator are the godly ; while those who leave God out of their thoughts and their plans, who live with no consciousness of His presence, and with no love for His name, are the ungodly. Now, it may frequently happen that the godly man, under the stress of temptation, or by the power of strong evil tendencies in the flesh, will fall into grievous sin — like David and Peter.

Or, it may even be the case, that, by reason of inherited disposition, or early training, the godly man will exhibit mean and unworthy traits of character — like Jacob. And so, too, on the other hand, the godless man will often possess and manifest many beautiful and lovable qualities, — nay, under the influence of purely worldly motives, and with no reference whatever to the divine love or the divine command, he will often develop a highly moral, upright, and even generous character. Still further ; through some false modesty or mistaken humility, the truly godly man may never openly acknowledge the faith and love of his soul, while undoubtedly many who are really worldly and godless use the forms and assume the livery and repeat the phrases of faith, so that we cannot judge with any degree of certainty who belong to one class and who to the other.

Still the great distinction is there. And the day will come when we shall all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ. Under the all-power-

ful, supernatural training to which the godly man has submitted himself, all his sin and imperfections will be finally cleansed away, and all his righteousness made perfect; while the godless man, stripped of all pretenses, and being no longer under temporal, but only under eternal influences, to which he has always refused submission, will also appear in his true character. And then in that day of perfect truth when the secret of all hearts shall be revealed, the word of the prophet Malachi shall be fulfilled, and "we shall return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."

Now if all this be true, and it seems to me that it must require immense self-confidence and a most blind egotism to deny it,—if this be true, that there are just two parties in the world, two classes of men; if it be true that our real, permanent character and our eternal destiny depend upon our godliness or ungodliness, then certainly the most important question that any man can ask himself is, "Where do I stand? to which class do I belong?" And we should give our souls no rest until we know that we are on God's side. And this brings us to the great *central* truth of Christianity. In *Jesus Christ* God comes down to men, and reveals Himself perfectly as the Friend and Saviour of human souls.

In and through Christ we have access unto the Father. He is "the way, the truth, and the life."

By accepting Him as our guide and example, by believing His words, by trusting in His work, by adopting the principles of His life and His teachings, by union with Him in love and faith, we come to know God, and to know that we know Him. And then through this loving companionship with the Son of God, we learn to recognize the divine voice, to submit to the divine will, to be guided by the divine spirit, and so we become *essentially* godly, and have the assurance of salvation and eternal life. And there is *no other way* to get on the Lord's side and to bring God into our lives; there is no other name given under Heaven whereby we can be saved. "No one," says Christ, "cometh unto the Father but by me."

No doubt where the historical Christ has not been made known, men may feel after God and find Him; yet it is through Christ that they are saved and enabled to become godly, although they know it not. But those who know Christ historically, who are familiar with His life and character, cannot reject Him without rejecting God; for God is in Christ for the purpose of reconciling the world unto Himself, and if you refuse this most full and complete revelation of God, how can you hope ever to find Him in any other way.

If you do not recognize the voice of God when he speaks by His beloved Son; if you are not attracted and won by the love of God, when that love is displayed at Bethlehem and on Calvary; if

your heart and conscience do not respond to the spirit which breathes forth from all the radiant life of the Nazarene; if, when you look upon Jesus, you see in Him no divine beauty that you should desire Him; if, when He stands before you declaring, "I am the bread of life," you feel no soul hunger,—then I see not how you can ever come unto God, or realize His presence, or fulfill that condition of *godly living*, which is necessary to insure you a part in the great salvation.

O, then, be Christian if you would be godly. Range yourself on the side of God and truth, by accepting the Son of God as the guide of your thoughts, and the Lord of your affections; and under His leadership, and through brotherhood with Him, you will be enabled to "walk with God," and to know the inexpressible peace and joy of His saving presence.

And now, one step further: if you are a God-fearing man, seeking to live daily under the divine direction, holding, by faith in Jesus Christ, to the friendship and fatherhood of the Creator, then it is not only your privilege, but your imperative *duty* to publicly acknowledge this your life principle. It is clearly demanded of you that you should add your name and your influence to the organized body of God's people.

And the fact which we have emphasized this morning, that the church does not contain only

the godly, nor all the godly, affords no ground of excuse for the neglect of this duty. Because tares grow with the wheat, shall we let our fields lie fallow? Because bad fish are in the net as well as good ones, shall we destroy our nets? In spite of its defects and imperfections, the church is the divinely appointed instrument for the maintenance and extension of godliness among men. This is its aim, this is the reason of its existence. For this purpose its countless buildings are reared, its congregations are assembled, its worship is ordered. It is for the promotion of godliness that its ministers are ordained to preach, and its missionaries are sent to the uttermost parts of the earth, and the Bible distributed among all nations.

To the same great end of keeping the hearts of men in conscious union with God are its sacred rites of baptism and the Lord's supper; that by outward sign, by significant symbol, it may express and deepen its conviction that there is a difference between consecration and worldliness, and that "the Lord knoweth them that are his." This is the aim of the church; and though it falls far below its ideal, it is the only institution in the world appointed by God to represent and increase the party of the godly among men. How else, then, except by sharing the responsibilities of church membership, can you either manifest your purpose to lead a godly life, or do your part in upholding

the name and carrying forward the purposes of your Lord and Saviour?

Is there any other organization which can show such evidence of divine appointment? Is there any other party or body of men, any fraternity or society, by joining which you can range yourselves by the side of the apostles and martyrs and the godly of all ages, as followers and subjects of Jesus Christ? Is there any other institution through which you can work to such advantage for the persuasion of men to the love and fear of God?

But, you say, why need I belong to *any* organization? why join any society? If I believe in God and try to live righteously before Him, is not that enough?—No; it is not fair; it is not honest; for why should you desire to shirk the responsibilities and duties which God has laid upon all who would be accounted His friends? Or why should you refuse to show your colors? There is an influence to be exerted, there is a work to be performed by the church; and if you are to be excused from this service, why should not I, and why should not all the servants of God be excused? And then when we have disbanded the church, and each proceeds on his own account to live the godly life, and do the godly work, how long do you think such a state of things would last? Is it not evident that either godliness would soon become a lost art, or a new organization, a new society, a new *church*

would be formed from the very necessities of the case?

But, you say, surely I can be a Christian, I can be saved, without being a church member! That may be true; but it is utterly irrelevant. It has nothing to do with the matter in hand. I am not urging you to join the church in order that you may be saved, but in order that being saved, you may perform the duty and fill the position of a saved man. That duty is in the church—that position is among God's professed friends.

WHAT TO DO WITH CHRIST.

BY REV. J. W. DINSMORE,
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What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?
Matt. 27: 22.

So cried Pontius Pilate, the pagan, in his anger, vexation, and fear. The question was probably jerked out with a bitter, spiteful fling. He was sorely perplexed by the conflict between what he felt to be his duty, and what he fancied to be his policy. He knew well enough what he ought to do. It is plain, too, that he wished to release Jesus, whom he declared to be faultless, and the victim of causeless malice. He at first refused to try the case, and sent Jesus to Herod; but that ruffian, having mocked and insulted the meek, but august prisoner, sent Him back to Pilate.

Pilate now tried to silence the furious clamor of the rabble, but was overborne by the pressure of public feeling, and by the powerful energy of a tumultuous assembly, which he was noble enough to detest, but not noble enough to crush. He



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failed because his resistance was too weak and conciliatory. It was no time for polite persuasions ; it was a time for a commanding voice and a mailed hand. Pilate could not plead want of power. He was the representative of the greatest power on earth. He had in the city, a garrison of imperial troops, who at a word from him, would have swept the streets of these lawless men, or made those streets red with their blood. That word was not spoken. On the contrary, he tried by craft and diplomacy to divert these blood-hounds from their scent, and cheat them of their prey by placing a notorious robber—a sort of Sontag or Evans—and the holy Christ side by side, and asking the crowd to choose between these two. He thought by this device to force a favorable verdict, but he mistook the temper of that murderous multitude. He then made the mob a jury, and appealed to them for a verdict as to what he should do with “Jesus which is called Christ,” and this, as if he foolishly thought that the crowd had conscience enough to treat Christ fairly ! At any rate, he was planning that the decision might be made, the responsibility taken by others, and not by him ; because he wished most explicitly to disown the crime and put the blood of the Innocent on other hands than his. Of course, this was a weak and childish subterfuge. But let us give Pilate his due. Something is to be said in his behalf. He is not to be

classed with the brutal Herod, nor with the roaring mob, nor with the blood-thirsty chief priests who instigated the enormous wickedness.

If there had been no worse men than Pilate, Jesus would not have been crucified. While he had a natural conscience, and a Roman sense of justice, he was a pagan, and had neither the standard nor the feeling of right and wrong which is furnished by the Word of God ; nor had he any of those high sentiments and noble instincts of righteousness which are wrought into us by the blood and traditions of unnumbered generations of Christian ancestors. Besides, his situation was extremely trying and difficult. The outlying provinces of the vastly extended empire were under the care of procurators, or deputy-governors, who were held to strict account directly to the emperor. There was a civil service system by which an able and successful administration brought the governor credit at Rome, and promotion to a more lucrative place. By failure, failure especially in the two respects of keeping down insurrections and collecting taxes, he lost his credit, and often his head—not merely his official head, but his proper, personal head.

Now Judea was one of the most turbulent and troublesome of all the provinces of the empire. What Ireland is and long has been to England, Judea was to Rome,—the perennial hot-bed of se-

ditions, conspiracies, and insurrections. Governor after governor had tried and failed, and had suffered the doom of the unsuccessful. Pontius Pilate was bound to succeed. At first he had tried severity, and had turned his soldiers upon a parcel of fanatical Galileans, and slaughtered them in the streets, thus mingling their blood with their sacrifices. This had failed. Now he was trying the policy of conciliation and compromise, anything to keep the people quiet and get them to pay their taxes, till he could get rid of his dangerous place and go up higher. Political success was to him the breath of life. He hated injustice, but he hated failure still more. He was afraid to shed innocent blood, but he was far more afraid of his imperial master on the banks of the Tiber. The chief priests perceiving his timidity, boldly threatened him with the vengeance of Cæsar if he suffered this Man, who claimed to be a king, and so a rival of Cæsar, to escape. It was plain that the ruling classes among the Jews fiercely demanded the blood of this blameless but friendless Man, and having tried in vain to argue and coax them out of their purpose, he at last gave in to it.

He thought the blood of Jesus would appease the fury of the people ; that the storm would soon blow over ; that this awful outrage on a poor and friendless Man would soon be forgotten, and all things settle down as they were before. So, in

that critical moment, he gave up the Lord to the malice of His foes, and his own name to endless infamy, at what he doubtless fancied to be the dictate of worldly prudence and the demand of public policy. O Pilate! Pilate! I must blame thee; but none the less I sadly pity thee. Thou didst not mean to connive at the most hideous crime of history, but thou didst it all the same. Thou didst miss thy one great opportunity, not to win a fleeting credit in Jerusalem or Rome, but to win immortal honor in all the world and through all the Christian ages; and now, thou art pilloried in the sight of all the Christian centuries, in history, literature, art, and execrated by all Christian hearts, because in this supreme hour thou didst prove craven and coward; didst deny the Holy One and Just, and through thy weakness gave Him up to death!

This I judge to be the true explanation of Pilate's conduct, and I have dwelt upon it, because it is so dwelt upon in the Gospels. All this has not merely a historic interest, but a living one to us here and now. That scene, so far away as to time and place, has its millionfold repetition among ourselves here and now. Pilate's question is not one that can be asked and answered once for all. Every one of us has to meet that very issue, and answer for himself,—“What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?” And the question goes to

the very root of all we have to fear on the one hand, and to hope for on the other, in this world and the world to come. Pilate's question received several answers at that time, and they were typical of like answers the same question receives now.

1. *There was the answer of Christ's open and aggressive foes.* This found expression in the fierce demand of the chief priests and the mob, that He be crucified. They would listen to nothing. They knew what they wanted; their hate was definite and concentrated; inflamed by malice, they surged and shouted round the judgment seat of Pilate, silencing his expostulations by simply yelling, "Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" And it is but sober truth to say that this has been the temper of aggressive hatred of our Lord from that day to this. The ruffian yell of the mob has found its echo in the pagan scorn of Celsus and Porphyry and Julian; in the refined raillery of Voltaire; in the coarse vulgarity of Paine; in the shallow and shocking blasphemies of our American stump orator of atheism; and scarcely less bitterly, in the more polite vituperation of more gentlemanly infidels.

We marvel that the harmless and holy Christ, who never did anything but good, should have provoked such deadly hostility against Himself even in that far-away and semi-barbarous age. But is it not a greater marvel that in this last part of the nineteenth

Christian century, and among ourselves in the beneficent shadow of Christian institutions ; in the luminous focus of Christian civilization, so many should be found who share this old hostility — who fairly hate Jesus Christ ? Can this be accounted for except as Christ and the Scriptures explain it, — by referring it to the perverseness and depravity of our fallen nature due to sin ? And this very hatred, so deadly and so causeless, is a striking proof of His truth and claims because expressly foretold. If it had not been encountered, that would have tended to prove Him a false witness. Hence the gratuitous hostility of His foes helps to vindicate His truth and establish His claims.

2. *The second may be called the evasive answer,* and was voiced by Pilate's wife, when she sent to her husband a hasty and earnest message, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." She had a woman's insight into the difficulty and danger of her husband's position, and she was so concerned about it that it troubled her dreams. Her fears may have resulted from her superstition, or from a veritable communication from God. Why not ? The Greek Church has canonized this woman, and put her in the catalogue of saints, because of her effort to save the Lord by saving her husband. Anyhow, she clearly saw the peril of her husband's position, peril on the one

hand to his integrity as a magistrate, and his honor as a man and a Roman if he should condemn the innocent ; and on the other, the peril to his office and his life, if he should undertake to rescue Him from popular fury. So she anxiously counseled him to extricate himself from the difficulty by refusing to have anything to do with this just Man. But that was the one thing precisely which Pilate could not do. He tried his best, in more ways than one, to follow this advice. At first he refused to take jurisdiction, saying to the Jews, "This is a question of your own law ; let Him be sent to Herod, your own Jewish magistrate." Herod would not take jurisdiction either, and having brutally insulted Him, sent Him back to Pilate, who having tried by persuasions, expostulations, and appeals to effect His deliverance, at last gave up, loudly disowning all responsibility, and publicly washing his hands as a silly token, on the childish pretext that he could thus wash his soul of the whole black infamy and crime.

So is it ever, my friends. Jesus Christ humbles Himself to stand before the bar of every one of us for judgment. We may try in many ways to evade the issue, but in vain. We may refuse jurisdiction, but He will return and confront us again. We must give in our verdict, make our decision. No evasions or subterfuges will avail. We may boldly confess and espouse Him, or deny and condemn

Him; but one thing we cannot do, and that is do nothing — dismiss the case without a judgment. Nor can we on any plea or pretext wash our hands or our souls of the responsibility of our verdict. That decree will stand; it is entered on the records of a Higher Court, and one day we shall meet it. What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ? is a question which at this moment forces itself upon every one of us who has not already settled it finally and forever. It cannot be evaded or avoided; it must be squarely faced. What is your answer? That answer will be given before you leave this house, and angels will carry it for record in the Higher Court.

3. *The third answer may be called the compromising answer.* It found expression in the language of Pilate himself, — “I will chastise him, and let him go.” Pilate confessed that there was no fault in Him; that the arraignment was wholly of malice; yet he proposed to chastise Him. This was a light whipping, inflicted for petty offenses, with small cords; a very different thing from the scourging, a punishment of the most dreadful description, with the terrific flagellum, the most horrible scourge ever invented. This last was so terrible that strong men often swooned, and not infrequently died under it. But the chastising was more for degradation than for suffering. Pilate proposed this, not because it was deserved, but in the hope that

by this degradation, the malice of the mob might be appeased. In proposing a smaller injustice, he hoped to escape a greater. But the hope was a foolish delusion. His proposal was instantly and loudly rejected, and the bloody demand renewed and re-enforced. The Lord's enemies were not to be cheated of their prey by any compromise, nor turned from their fell purpose by any partial concession. Indeed, Pilate's proposal served only to strengthen the resolution and inflame the fury of the rabble. It showed that the governor was wavering, and it required but the downright energy of the mob to overbear the vacillating Pilate, and compel him to give up the Holy One, not to chastisement, but to the terrific scourge and the awful cross.

Pilate's whole policy miserably failed. Instead of the favor, he got the contempt of the people. Soon he was recalled to Rome in disgrace, and to avert a dreaded doom, perished by his own hand ; or according to another story, was executed by Caligula, the emperor. He sold his soul to keep his place. It is certain that he lost his place, and it is to be feared that he lost his soul. So is it ever, my friends. The position of Pilate is forever untenable ; his proposal forever unavailing. When the question comes up, "What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ ?" concessions, compromises, and half-way measures, are forever hateful and

intolerable at once to the holy God, and to upright and earnest men,—yes, even to the enemies of our Lord. The Pilate spirit is sometimes seen in the church, and even in the pulpit, in a readiness to lower the claims of the gospel, to soften its hard doctrines, to relax its stringent obligations, to dishonor the divine Person and Majesty of Jesus Christ, in the hope that what is left will be accepted, that carnal and unspiritual men will be conciliated, that the world will be brought into better humor with Christ and Christianity than now. This is a shallow delusion—a silly and stupid mistake. Pilate showed himself to be weak, and made himself contemptible in the eyes of all honest and earnest men by his conciliating, cowardly, truckling policy.

That pulpit must always be feeble in its hold on the moral convictions of the people; that church can never be aggressive and commanding which goes in the Pilate spirit and works on the Pilate policy. The pulpits that are the most powerful, from Chrysostom to Charles Spurgeon and John Hall, are precisely those that exalt the Lord Jesus most highly; that assert His truth and maintain His claims with the most unfaltering accent and the most uncompromising courage. And, for us as individuals, there is no middle ground between the low level of Christ's revilers, and the high level of

His disciples and defenders. So He classifies us, and will in the Great Day. "He that is not with me, is against me ;" and, "Whosoever shall deny me," etc. The time comes, my friends, and comes soon, when all evasions and subterfuges break down, and we must stand face to face with the actual and eternal fact. Pilate long since saw his awful blunder and sin, but when it was too late to mend it. Pilate had his hour and opportunity to get an immortality not only of worldly honor but also of heavenly glory. He lost it ; not because he hated the Lord, but because he had not the courage and decision openly to confess Him. And his failure was fatal. And this surely is a lesson to us all, and one we need deeply to ponder.

Finally : The Christian answer to Pilate's question. This finds voice in such expressions as these : "My Lord and my God ;" "Let us also go, that we may die with him ;" "Let us go forth . . . bearing his reproach ;" "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." As there was no doubt as to what the mob wished to do with Jesus which is called Christ, so there was no doubt what His disciples wished to do with Him. Only Pilate was in doubt, the shrewd, calculating man of the world, who tried to serve himself and this world without sacrificing the Lord,—it was he who was at a loss as to what he should do

with Jesus which is called Christ. By position and authority he was the strongest man there, and yet he was the weakest.

Just so is it to-day and among ourselves. The out-and-out enemies of our Lord know what they want to do with Him. "Away with Him, away with Him! crucify Him!" Dishonor Him in the estimation of the people, and destroy His truth and kingdom from the earth! No less, His out-and-out friends know what they want to do with Him. They want to honor and exalt Him as the ever-blessed Saviour and Sovereign of the world, and by all means to extend and strengthen His truth and kingdom in the earth. His enemies have a definite purpose, an unrelenting malice, and a resolute and determined energy of hatred and opposition.

Millions of His loyal and loving friends, who know the power of His saving grace in their own lives, have an equally definite, and far nobler purpose; a benevolent zeal no less unrelenting than the malice of His foes; an energy, earnestness, and an enthusiasm more self-sacrificing and heroic than any other cause or person known to history has ever inspired, all directed to the extension of His kingdom and the glory of His name. Only the half-hearted, the worldly, the carnal,—those who want to manage so as to get this world's prizes and pleasures, and yet not deny the Lord and lose their souls,—only such are debating with themselves the

question, "What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?" Is n't it high time you decided that question? It will not wait; it will be decided for you. Pilate shirked and shuffled, but the issue was forced upon him, and he practically decided what to do with Jesus. If, indeed, you are resolved to risk life and death, to front eternal destiny without Him, and among His enemies, then nothing more is to be said. On that decision you must stand or fall. God pity you when you move over the verge of the world, as you surely shall a little farther on, and have no place to set your foot, and are embraced in an eternity where you have no home and no friend!

But I do not believe you have made any such resolution. And if you expect in the great Day of God to be owned by Him, how can you justify your present denial of His Blessed Name? Do you expect more light or knowledge? Whence is it to come? Do you look for more persuasion? Why?—and from what quarter? At this moment, Christ stands before you for verdict, just as truly as He stood before Pilate. The question is up and must have an answer. The issue and the hour are critical and solemn. Pilate met and passed his doom in that place and that hour. He thought it was the hour of judgment for Jesus; in a far deeper sense it was the hour of judgment for Pilate. Let us remember that what we do in time, determines

destiny. For the decisions and the doom of the Judgment Day are simply the disclosure of the deeds and decisions of time. What we do here and now, in these pews and in such moments as these, will be revealed and realized then and there.

The destinies of eternity are the outcome of the decisions of time. We shall be tried by the record. The books shall be opened, and the quick and the dead shall be judged by the things written in the books. It is not by what we may do then and there, but by what we do here and now, that eternal destiny is determined. The question now is, "What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?" In due time, and ere long, all this will be reversed, and the question will be, What shall Jesus, reigning Lord and eternal Judge, do with me? Once Jesus stood at Pilate's bar to be judged. Long since, Pilate stood at Jesus' bar, to receive for the things done in his body, whether good or bad. So it is, and so it shall be with every one of us all. Let us lay it to heart. "What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?" That is the question now. What shall He do with us? That will be the question of Christ in the Day of Judgment.



REV. THOMAS CHALMERS EASTON, D. D.

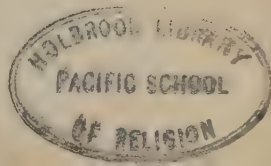
WHERE TO THROW YOUR SALT, OR “HEALING THE SPRINGS.”

BY REV. THOMAS C. EASTON, D. D.,

Late Pastor of Calvary Church, San Francisco, California.

*And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and
cast the salt in there. 2 Kings 2 : 21.*

ELISHA, returning from the triumphal ascension of Elijah, conspicuous and illustrious as the translation must have been, as the chariots and horses of fire, driven by angelic couriers, bore the prophet to his rest, clothed with a double portion of Elijah's spirit, is prepared to serve his God. Entering the city of Jericho, the representative men present to him their grievance,—that while they have a pleasant situation, their water is unwholesome and their soil barren. Elisha requests them to bring him a new cruise and some salt, and going to the fountain-head, he casts the salt into the spring, and so sweetens the waters and makes fruitful their lands. This miracle of the prophet illustrates a great truth, that to purify and regenerate the world we must cast the healing and curative salt, not into the



streams, but the fountain-heads of life; and this furnishes me with a theme for our mutual consideration.

RELIGION IN THE SPRING-HEADS OF LIFE.

Religion! What do you mean by religion? I mean a recognition of the personal God in relation with my personal self. Mr. Joseph Cook, in one of his Tremont Temple lectures, referring specially to the changed attitude of the Emersonian transcendentalists and general utterances of the Concord School of Philosophy, says: "There has come upon eastern Massachusetts such a change that to-day, if I am to be serious in my solitude, if I am not to take the side of superficiality and coarseness, if I am to be abreast of the loftiest thought in the tumult of our speculative age, I must believe in two things: that I shall go thence as a personality, and that on the other side of the grave I shall meet God as a personality."

That utterance of the Temple lecturer lays the substratum of all religious faith. I a personality, God a personality, and these two personalities going to meet and recognize each other and hold close relations and have great concerns to settle beyond the grave,—that is the vital essence of religion. But as a Christian, I must introduce another factor into this problem of natural theism, and that factor is Christ. The personality of God is to me inseparable from the personal Christ.

When, therefore, I speak of religion in the spring-heads of life, I mean the Christian religion distinctively. And yet not as we find it crystallized into the dogmas of any church or ecclesiastical organism, but the all-penetrating, all-preserving, all-sweetening truth of the Gospel, held in solution in all the manifold activities of life, as the salt pervades and sweetens the sea, as the light pervades and glorifies the air.

With this view of religion you cannot separate the sacred and the secular. Religion comes to our weekday and worldly work, and all our business life, and says, "Be ye holy, for holiness is success;" to our intellectual and social activities, and says, "Be ye holy, for holiness is progress;" whispers to all the ears of our affections and sensibilities, "Be ye holy, for holiness is happiness;" puts its strong arm around all our weaknesses and says, "Be ye holy, for holiness is moral omnipotence!" Note, then,—

First, RELIGION IN THE SPRING-HEAD OF PRIVATE LIFE.—By this I mean temperance, true self-control in all our personal activities, truthfulness in word and act, fidelity to trusts committed, integrity, that wholeness of character which the very word implies. Is there a growing disregard of these cardinal virtues of private life in our times? Is this fountain-head of the moral character bitter? Is it growing more and more unwholesome? If it be so, where is the new cruise that shall sweeten it? I

know of none but the salt of a personal and operative faith in God, as holding immediate relations with every individual life. A high and worthy moral character cannot be built on self-interest, or the love of approbation, or personal ambition, or the simple influence of benevolence, or the fear of personal loss. God alone is the foundation of all the truly great in human life ; only God in Christ recognized, appropriated by a living faith, can give such spiritual quality to our personal manhood as to make it pure within, with the prime characteristics of personal integrity, uprightness, and grandeur.

Teach the young, teach communities, teach public opinion that the individual man is accountable to a personal God for private habits, private indulgences, all private living and acting, and you will have fewer secret intrigues, fewer wild-cat speculations, fewer robberies, fewer moral bankrupts in all the varying phases of private life. Cast the salt in there ! What is true of private life is pre-eminently true of all the sacred and clasping relationships of home. If this fountain-head be poisoned, who shall be able to regenerate the streams ? We need religion in our homes because of the closeness of the bonds binding us together there. In the easy violations of duty, in the daily forgetfulness of the holiest promises made at the marriage altar, in the dissimilarity of tastes, dispositions, tempers, aims, where each real self must adjust itself to each real

self, or else foster an incompatibility that will ruin happiness, there is no spot on earth that needs the quickening of religion like home. Home piety is the nation's bulwark of strength! Its literature, its spirit, its government must be sweetened by the salt of a vital Christian faith. Christ in calmness, in tenderness, in self-sacrifice, dwelling in the heart of each, will make that home Christian. The nearest symbol of the heaven for which we yearn should be the earthly home. Cast the salt in there!

Second, RELIGION IN THE SPRING-HEAD OF SOCIAL LIFE.—Society is to-day seething with crude, pernicious, disorganizing theories, from the Ural Mountains to the Golden Gate. Nihilism in Russia, Communism in Germany and France, the so-called International League, whose seat is on the Thames, but whose arms reach out into Ireland, Italy, Spain, America,—these, and a horde of kindred atheistic and anarchical agencies, are secretly working at the head sources of our social life and order, and undermining the foundations of our Christian civilization. Where is the antidote to this social poison? The poison is essentially atheistic. “Down with governments, down with legal enactments, down with the rights of property, down with the family as growing out of the marriage relation, down with the church, down with the Bible, down with God!” As the poison is atheistic so the antidote must be

theistic. Up with God! In the matter of social pleasures, up with God; in the matter of domestic life, up with God; in business relations, up with God; in the regulation of the industrial relations of capital and labor, up with God; in the acquisition and use of wealth, up with God; in every relation of man with man, enthrone Jehovah and "Crown Him Lord of all!"

Put the Christian law of love into every social spring-head, and, like the cruise of Elisha, it shall sweeten all the bitter waters of human strife and millennialize the world!

Third, RELIGION IN THE SPRING-HEAD OF CIVIL LIFE.—There is a popular clamor in our country against any recognition of God or Christ or religion by the State. We cry no favoritism to any religion in a free and democratic government. Have you considered well to what this would tend if carried out? Reconstruct your calendar; for the very date of every legal enactment in the past, including that of our national birthday, is a tacit recognition of Christianity; abolish every oath in your courts of justice, for these only bind as they take hold on God; banish every chaplain from court and legislative hall; expunge from your statute books all allusion to a Sabbath; hammer off your national coinage the simple and beautiful legend, "In God we trust;" work every State and federal officer seven days in the week, nay, abolish your week altogether, for it

is not astronomical but divine in its origin ; eviscerate your whole complex jurisprudence of all the distinctive elements of a Christian civilization, and cut the nation adrift from all the religious associations of the past, yea, isolate it from all sympathetic relations with Christendom, and make it stand out, what ? — A Godless, Christless, Bibleless, prayerless, religionless iceberg, without a green thing to intimate spiritual life or suggest a hope of immortality ! Does this sound like sarcasm, unnecessary and unmeaningless satire ? I devoutly wish it were so. But that wish cannot be gratified, for the air is thick with practical infidelity concerning the divine jurisdiction over the acts of men in a public and representative capacity. When the old sergeant-at-arms in Washington, denied admittance into the ministers' gallery in the Senate to the clergyman who sought an entrance, there was too much truth in the reason he assigned. "Sir," he said, "that is the ministers' gallery." "And I am a minister." "Of what court, pray?" "Of the court of Heaven." "The United States government holds no relations with that court."

Are you ready for that ? I think not. The fact is, in all civil considerations we are a Christian nation. It has a right to be such in virtue of the great unwritten constitution of discovery, of settlement, of foundation, of venerable precedent, of general acquiescence, of even popular demand. No

improvement can come by extracting whatever salt of religion may be held in almost invisible solution, but by casting in more. We need more of God, more of Christ, more of the spirit of His Gospel, more of the saving influence of an operative Christianity in all the departments of our governmental life. Cast the salt in there! Notice then,—

Fourth and last, RELIGION IN THE SPRING-HEAD OF OUR EDUCATIONAL LIFE.—There are three theories in regard to the relations of education and religion, and each of these has strong advocates and supporters in our time :—

1. That they have “nothing to do with each other,” and that, practically, they should be divorced. This theory regards popular education in all its stages, from infancy to manhood, from the primary department of the public school to the graduating class of the university, as a purely secular concern. This theory has some support among religious men, but chiefly it is the theory of all unbelievers, skeptics, and atheists. It is gross secularism!

2. At the other extreme is the theory that all education belongs to the church; that intellectual culture is only one element in character building, while moral and religious culture is a co-element of paramount importance, and the two should never be separated. It is claimed that the church, and not the State, is the foster-mother of all growth of

character. Hence, parochial schools and colleges rise in antagonism to our public schools, and the papal church, with its hostile spirit to our Protestant Bible, builds these institutions. It is extreme churchism !

3. Between these two extremes we find a golden mean. In reply to the secularist we say education cannot be secularized. We have a moral nature. The child has certain ethical appetites. These will be fed. You cannot educate on the basis of a pure secularism, because of this moral nature, which, in the process of intellectual culture, must find some development, either upward or downward. On the other hand, we do not accept the logic of the Romanist, demanding a distinctively dogmatic Christian element in popular education. We would not insist on catechism or Biblical instruction in the common school. We find a broad and generous platform, resting on strong and lasting substructions, on which all the friends of popular education can stand ; and this is not church education, but Christian education. I do not believe that to be consistent with our theory of government public schools must be Godless, Christless, Bibleless, prayerless. I am persuaded that as our government, though not declaratively in the letter, is yet implied in the spirit, Christian, so the religion of Christ should be a kind of unwritten law in the school-room, controlling the words, the acts, the conduct

of teacher and scholar; informally but strongly inculcating the divine principles of love to God and love to man, illustrating the sublime moralities of the Sermon on the Mount, and distilling, as the dew on the flowers, the sweet influences of an unannounced and undogmatic Gospel into the blossoming minds and hearts of childhood. Cast the salt in there!

There is no other position to take as to the higher education. It is to be feared that in many of our State universities there is little if any religious influence. Sometimes there is a decidedly unreligious drift; so much so as not only not to establish but absolutely unsettle whatever religious faith the student previously enjoyed, and send him adrift an agnostic, with doubts darkening life here and hereafter. Now, what are the facts? You cannot study man and his works well apart from God. Every truth in human philosophy is the echo of God in the soul, and pure mathematics is God's truth, an outcome of His own eternal thought. You can no more teach history well without noting the finger-marks of God on the scroll, than you can teach mechanics without the recognition of force; or astronomy, and leave out reference to the principles of gravitation. What would you say of the scientist who should discourse learnedly of chemical action but ignore all matter of affinities; or of meteorology, making no mention

of that subtile and all-pervading agent, electricity; or the musician who should thrum the keyboard, but never allude to the mysterious but beautiful laws of sound? But such a one would no more signally fail of the truly scientific idea than does he who tries to read nature without apprehending God, or to explain the mysteries of human life without taking cognizance of the religious forces that have so much to do with that life.

Hence, in these times, there can be no full, rounded education that is not, at least in its ultimate reduction, a Christian education. You cannot — it is impossible — eliminate Christ and revealed religion from the equation of truth and still preserve the equation! So we conclude that to conserve the interests of both education and religion, they must be mutually inter-penetrating and inter-acting; education, in its culture of the whole man, giving something like a harmonious and consistent form and method to all the religious instincts and outgrowths, while the warm and vitalizing atmosphere of the cross of Calvary shall make the cold, glittering body of merely secular education alive with the power of God. Cast the salt in there!

If, then, our nation survives the fate that has overtaken the proudest monarchies, it must be because these healthy vitalities of our interior life flourish. God in the home; God in civil life;

God in education ; and to secure this, the one and only thing remaining is the universal spread of the Bible ! That is the salt that must be cast into all the spring-heads of our life, private, social, civil, and religious !

This wondrous Book is adapted and designed to meet all phases and conditions of human society in all its relations and under all circumstances. Look at what it has done. All time, all history, are commentaries on its meaning, and evidences of its power. Moving through the ages, "like the march of the planets," its language, the language of honor and conquest ! its accents, how manly and noble ! its words, how human yet how divine ! its influence, how renovating and all-inspiring ! It has moulded anew the life of the nations and the politics of the world ; has impregnated the whole soil of society with its principles, and the world's atmosphere with its influences, in spite of all the perversion and opposition of men. All the humane and philanthropic movements, and social ameliorations of modern times, what are they ? — Only the ideas of the Word of God carried out — so many acted and exemplified gospels. And what does all this prove but the wonderful adaptability of the Bible to be the motive power of the world ?

Being thus the best informing energy of the world, the true soul of its best life, it cannot stop short of "universal empire !" With its exceeding

broad commandments, so broad that they touch life at all points, the minister of Jesus Christ in expounding and enforcing the claims of this Word, is not to consent to any abridgment of its authority or circumscription of its domain. Having unfurled its standard over the citadel,—the spiritual nature of man,—he is not to stop there, but is to lengthen his radius until he sweeps around the whole circumference of human life, until on the bridles of our horses and beams of our machinery, on our merchandise and on our hire, there shall be inscribed, “Holiness to the Lord!”

What a prowling, inquisitive, meddlesome book this Bible is! It insists upon going with man everywhere, to supervise all his doings and regulate all his affairs. Into the halls of state, into the cabinets of kings and rulers, into every office, counting-room, store, mill, and shop it enters, proclaiming its truths, revealing its governing principles, and calling men to virtue and righteousness. Theodore Parker said of it:—

“This collection of books has taken such a hold on the world as no other. It is read of a Sabbath in all of the ten thousand pulpits of our land. The sun never sets on its gleaming pages. It goes equally to the cottage of the plain man and the palace of the king. It is woven into the literature of the scholar, and colors the talk of the street. The bark of the merchant cannot sail the sea without it. No ships of war go to the conflict but the Bible is there. It enters men’s closets, mingles in all the grief and cheerfulness

of life. The affianced maiden prays God in Scripture for strength in her new duties. Men are married by Scripture. The Bible attends them in their sickness; when the fever of this world is on them, the aching head finds a softer pillow when the Bible is underneath. The mariner escaping from shipwreck clutches this first of his treasures, and keeps it sacred to his God. It goes with the peddler in his crowded pack, cheers him at eventide when he sits down dusty and fatigued; and brightens the freshness of his morning face. It blesses us when we are born, gives names to half of Christendom, rejoices with us, has sympathy with our mournings, tempers our grief to finer issues. It is the better part of our sermons, it lifts man above himself. Our best of uttered prayers are in its storied speech, wherewith our fathers and patriarchs prayed. The timid man about awaking from the dream of life looks through the glass of Scripture, and his eye grows bright. He does not fear to stand alone; to tread the way unknown and distant, to take the death angel by the hand, and bid farewell to wife and babes and home. Men rest on this their dearest hopes; it tells them of God and His blessed Son, of earthly duties and of heavenly rest."

Such is a summary of the relations which it so completely fills. Who can ever doubt but it is the salt to sweeten all the streams of life — redeem the nation and save the world?

Men become holy, and nations become great, only according to the extent to which they bow in reverent submission and obedience to the guidance of this Book. Upon the great seal of that metropolis of Scotland, on the Clyde, famous for its vast ship building and world-wide commerce, there

stands the motto : "Let Glasgow flourish by the Word of God." It does flourish, and will flourish, and so will all cities that mould their life, institutions, reforms, and enterprises by firm allegiance to God's Word ! Nations do not perish by any evolution of fate. The sentence is stamped with characters of fire upon the history of the world, "The nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish." Would that all over our land we could witness a national revival of our loyalty to God and His Word ! When Napoleon was asked in regard to his Egyptian expedition whether he would take Jerusalem on his way, he answered bluntly, with a significant sneer, "Jerusalem does not come within the line of my operations." But he came within the line of Jerusalem's operations, and perished !

On an estate in the south of England there is a circular temple containing in niches the statues of some of England's great men. Above these statues there is this inscription : "Thine own friend, thy father's friend, and thy country's friend forsake not." While we thank God for great men and noble men in the past and the present, and would cherish more and more gratefully a memory of their services as their country's immortal benefactors, heroes, prophets, sages, poets, philosophers, and divines, yet we come back still to this Book wet with the ruddy drops of Jesus' blood, wet with the tears of

penitents, and bathed with the smiles of those whom it has consoled in death ; and by all the memories of the past, the responsibilities of the present, and hopes of the future, we stand by the pillars of God's temple ; and above all and everything else pledge the new love of heart and soul to take the words of "this truest Friend man ever knew" as our noblest heritage and choicest treasure forever.

Let us, dear friends, renew this morning our vows of love for, and loyalty to, the Bible. We love it not only as the old family Bible that lay on the stand in the home of our childhood ; not only because fingers that are now sweeping the harps of gold once turned its leaves by our side ; and eyes that are now riveted in ecstatic rapture on the Lamb in the midst of the throne, once read eagerly its divine promises ; and voices that now swell Heaven's anthem, once joined with ours in David's psalms and Calvary's hymns ; we love the Bible not only for its priceless legacy to our own souls ; for its wells of salvation, out of which we have drawn the refreshment of the living waters ; for its crimsoned Cross where our burden of sin rolled off forever ; for its empty sepulcher where we have risen to newness of life ; for its Jesus, Saviour, Elder Brother, abiding Friend ; for its never-failing promises in Christ ; for its assurance of death conquered and of mansions prepared,—but we love

the Bible because it is "the wisdom of God and the power of God" unto the world's salvation ; God's hammer to break flinty hearts to pieces ; God's truth to illumine darkened nations ; God's peace to calm troubled souls ; God's manna to nourish and sustain pilgrims up to the Jordan of the promised land ! And I tell you, we shall love it more when we open its pages at Jesus' feet, and the glory from His face brings out new harmonies, new celestial tints and unlooked-for glories. Its wondrous truths, prepared in the eternal councils of God before the foundation of the world, and enclosed as gems in this Book, will burst forth in richer beauty under the new heavens and in that new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

"Aye, fixed for everlasting years,
Unmoved amid the wreck of spheres,
The Word shall shine in cloudless day,
When heaven and earth are passed away."

Let us, then, cast the salt of this golden cruise into all the springs, nor stay the circulation of the blessed Word of God until these streams of our national life — the life of the globe — roll in purity even as pure as the crystal waters flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, in the ripple of whose waves shall be heard the music of its destiny : "THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURETH FOREVER." AMEN.

GOD INSCRUTABLE: WHY?

BY REV. W. W. FARIS, D. D.,

Editor San Francisco *Occident*.

Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble? Ps. 10:1.

IN these words the Psalmist voices the common feeling — that when we want God, He seems far off.

Often when, in our careless life, we do not want Him, His hand is felt, and it is heavy. Some providence lays an arrest upon our steps and balks our cherished plans. An unseasonable summer destroys our ungathered crop; or a fire, a storm, a flood, interferes; we feel the grip of God's hand on the throat of our prosperity. But when, in our trouble, we cry to Him for succor, He seems to recede. The heavens give back nor sign nor sound. Trouble and terror awaken us to some desire for God, when suddenly we find ourselves orphaned, stranded on the shores of empty space, or seized in the clutch of a soulless Fate. Why is this? "Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?"



REV. W. W. FARIS, D. D.



But this is not all. What squalor, what want and woe, lie all about us! Children begging, women oppressed, godlessness and crime rampant, men driven to despair! and still God's sun rises and sets, and his stars shine in the far-off sky,—the day serene and the night calm, the order of the universe undisturbed,—though hearts are breaking, and the precious freightage of human life goes to wreck by wholesale, till one would think the wails of myraid victims would pierce the skies. Where is God? Why is He so far off? Why is there no answer to man's cry? Faith reels, reason staggers, breath fails,—and yet the heavens are not rent to reveal God's hand stretched forth to our relief. Why? Does He not care? Is there, after all, no God? “Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?”

This language of Scripture expresses the universal conviction and the patent fact. God hides Himself. We feel after Him, but we touch Him not. Clouds and darkness are round about Him. We cry to Him, but no answering voice returns. The signs of His presence seem dim and distant. “Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself.” The only written revelation of Him is so marred by the touch of human fingers that scoffers find room for denying that it is a revelation. Only once, in one little corner of the world, and for but three years in all, was His Deity exhibited to human gaze, and then

in such wise that few believed it was God. God keeps Himself in the distance. No human hand can touch Him, nor eye gaze upon His face. Why is it so? Does He not know that we need Him? Why does He not come near? Does He not hear us cry after Him? Why does He not approach? Why does He not so order His ways that conviction should be forced on men? Why does He not so dispose Himself that acquaintance with Him should be as easy as acquaintance with our fellow-men? Since the knowledge of God is the deepest need of the heart, why is it not put within ready reach? Since the very salvation of the soul depends on acquaintance with Him, why does He not, if need be, burst the heavens to flash His person on our gaze, compel belief, and force doubt from the arena? "*Why* standest thou afar off, O Lord? *why* hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?"

These are fair questions, and they demand answer. They are common questions, rising from sincere lips, born of hearts wrung with anguish; and what shall we say?

If God is inscrutable, there are within our reach reasons why this must be so:—

1. There is a class of reasons growing out of God's nature. It is the nature of merit to be modest. Power hides. Your really great men never brag. Love conceals its passions. Holiness is retiring. Justice waits in secret, with sword sheathed,

until Crime comes along and lays upon it the necessity of revelation and action. Truth, notoriously, evades our grasp, and leads the searcher after it a weary pilgrimage. True goodness refuses to flaunt itself before the public. We all know that this is so ; these excellences, as seen among men, always appear veiled and retiring. And what is God but the living source and sum of these attributes ? “ God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, goodness, and truth.” By a necessity of His nature, therefore, He cannot but conceal Himself.

When you see a true philanthropist parading in public and courting applause ; when you find the sublimest truths of science as accessible as the lies of common gossip ; when you observe the rarest flowers of human goodness and purity jostling men on the street, obtruding themselves on notice ; when the highest wisdom of men has lost all modesty ; when greatness has become synonymous with brazen effrontery, — then, perhaps, you may expect God to expose His being to constant gaze ; certainly not till then.

Further : man is modest *in proportion* to his greatness, i. e., his true merit. Distance is the law of greatness. You can explore a township inch by inch, but thus to explore a continent would overtask your powers. From a hill-top your eye may range over a few square miles of plain and take in

much detail of the surface, but from what post of observation will your eye take in the round globe? From the plain you may see the hill-top, but the mountain height is wreathed in clouds or capped by snow. How, then, *can* God bring Himself down within range of your vision? It is with vast difficulty that He reveals Himself even in the face of nature and the trend of history; at greater cost, in the lives of His saints, and in the work and worship of His church; at still greater cost, in the human language of the Scripture; and at infinite cost, in the person of Jesus Christ. There is an inherent difficulty in the way of a better book than the Bible, or a clearer Incarnation than that of Jesus. Let us not complain of what we have; it is, we may reverently say, the best that God can give. It were far easier to create a world than to inspire a prophet; easier to order the ages, governing both nature and the kingdoms of men, than to produce the prodigious serial of inspired Scripture, or the complex vitality of the Christian church with God at its heart, and even feebly shining through; far easier to make and guard the universe than to send Jesus Christ. It seems probable that the continuance of our Lord on earth for much longer than three and thirty years would have so wrenched the nature of things as to have destroyed both man and nature in a series of colossal convulsions. Certain it is that, though this revelation came among a peo-

ple specially prepared for the event by fifteen centuries of specific training and expectation, among the fittest people then on the globe to receive it, the tragic consequences were with difficulty staved off month by month after the first year of His introduction to the people. The world could not bear more of God then, and it may be doubted if it could endure Christ's return for even a shorter period now. What, then, would have happened had the revelation been less dim?

Greatness cannot but hide; its head must be above the clouds, and its outstretched hands lost in the distance. To make mountain tops accessible to babes would be to destroy the mountain tops — not to speak of the babes. To bring God into clearer vision would be to annihilate Him. And the partial revelations we have, — in conscience, in nature, in Providence, in Scripture, in the living Christian and the living church, and especially in Jesus Christ, — are successive miracles of the most stupendous class. To have accomplished so much revelation of Himself without destructive violence to His own nature must have, as men would say, “tasked the brain and taxed the resources” of Infinity.

2. There is a class of reasons which directly concern the nature of man. If God must respect His own nature, so also must He respect that of the creatures He has made in His own image. He

must leave man scope for activity. There is a sense in which there is no room for both God and man in the play of life ; there is not room for both on the same plane. If man is to work on the plane of things visible, God must act on the plane of the things invisible. If a visible God were to rule the United States, human politics would go down with a crash, commerce would hide its head, science would be absorbed, invention discounted, and literature would retire abashed. There is too great a clash of method. God works by perfect pattern from the outset, while man gropes his way from imperfection to lesser imperfection. Let men do their best, yet our work is seamed and scarred with un wisdom and frailty ; but God's work is always good. Can these two work together?—Not on the same plane. Can a woodsman and a beaver work together in felling the same tree ? Can an ox and a mole plow in the same furrow ? When the ox enters the field, the mole must retire, or work under cover ; and when man reaches the frontier the beaver must emigrate or die. Much more, if God should walk among men, man would be crowded out. Fancy the chaos of society if God were a guest at every tea-party ; what a wreck of conversation and of comfort there would be ! Or try the political convention, the counting-room, even His own church ! Yet under the touch of His *unseen* Spirit, and the touch of His *veiled* provi-

dence, society and state and church may grow up to God. The unseen God can bear with human frailty in the slow evolution of goodness ; but God revealed would ruin man, *ipso facto*, by exposing all our imperfections and correcting all our faults at one stroke. The presence of God would paralyze activity, bewilder thought, crush the human will, and even extinguish our being, as man is now constituted. The veiling of His activity is a priceless boon to man. His clearer presence on the scene would be the signal for human collapse.

3. A third class of reasons concerns God's relation with man. God wishes to have with us the closest relations possible. But to assume too much at the outset would be to raise between us a barrier perhaps forever impassable. The best intimacies, even among men, are marked by a fine reserve. And when the intimacy is between a nobler and a grosser nature, it is the higher that must maintain the reserve ; the lower may be free to the uttermost limit, but the higher one must be so large as to keep something back without allowing his companion to miss anything. And especially the personal contact *must* not be too common and too constant, or the endearing intimacy is wrecked. As a matter of fact, hosts of desirable friendships go to pieces on this very rock.

God gives us of Himself all we are prepared to receive. As our spirits absorb His righteousness,

we can see Him more clearly. God cannot make the mistake of excessive revelations of Himself. "What fellowship hath light with darkness?" If the glare of day push into the night, it destroys the charm of night. The two may meet and touch at day-dawn and at twilight; yes, the sun may yield to the night a faint reflected light by way of the moon; and stars may glisten faintly in the sky; but that is the most that can be done. So God holds fellowship with us. And shall we blame Him? As well might night blame and deny the distant day, while yet it is the reflection of day, and its touch at morn and evening, which dispels the horror of the night.

Further: one look at the unveiled face of God would annihilate man. "No man can look on God and live." "No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." We have the highest revelation compatible with our comfort — yes, with our safety. Why do we not complain of the sun's distance? So far off it is that its huge bulk seems no bigger than a common pumpkin, and men are baffled by the mystery of its constitution and its constant blaze. The uncertainties of scientists about the sun are vastly greater than the uncertainties of theologians about God. Yet would we have the sun nearer? Our ordinary summer weather furnishes a felt and cogent answer: It would burn us up.

There is such a relation between the sun's light and the delicate mechanism of the human eye, and between the sun's heat and the delicate structure of the human body, and between God's holiness and love, and the limited capabilities and the frailties of man, that distance is our only safety. Were man cast-iron, a nearer sun would melt him, and were our hearts adamant, a visible, present God could not but destroy us by the operation of the essential laws of being. But the visible sun in the distance, *almost* hidden, reveals himself by light and heat; and the unseen God, standing afar off, blesses us by the rays of truth and goodness and beauty which appear in Christ and the Bible and conscience and good men.

A God too plainly revealed would shrivel the moral sense, instead of stimulating its growth. As plants grow *toward* the sun, because the distant sun is not too hot, so, in a grander way, man must rise to God. The search for God is a needed discipline. A too patent presence of God would empty us of merit. The essential task, the line of moral progress, lies in searching after the unseen God. It is true, as Jesus said, that if men "hear not Moses and the prophets neither will they believe though one rise from the dead." Faith becomes impossible when everything is plainly seen. The education of man is along the line of *discovery*. With special emphasis must this be true in the highest of all educations—the culture of the

soul in morals. The line of duty is in the line of church-going, prayer, Bible-reading, and devout living. The boy who waits to study geology until the science is finished and the complete cabinet arranged, will die a numskull; and the man who waits for religion, till religion becomes plain and perfect beyond dispute, will die unsaved. God's plan is now adjusted to our capacities; and every hour's delay in becoming a Christian is an hour of perilous crime.

4. A fourth class of reasons is based on the essential methods of creation and redemption alike. I name but one — evolution; or rather, development.

God never grows. He can only compress Himself until He touches us — as in Bible, Christ, or Christian. But His creation begins at the other end. All His work begins small, and grows to fullness. The seed becomes the oak. The babe becomes a man. The mind expands. The three chapters of Genesis were germinant, and have grown to the complete Bible. The church, at first embodied in Abraham and his family, shall grow till it becomes the perfected bride of Christ. And the idea of revelation, beginning with the visit and the sacrifice at the gate of Eden, grew through the ages till Christ came,—the highest revelation so far known. But the end is not yet. Since then the Christ is becoming better understood. Presently

another epoch will arrive, and in glory He shall return, more fully revealing the Father ; and throughout eternity the revelation will grow clearer and clearer to the eyes of the redeemed, as we grow ready to receive the clearer revelations.

“ Ah ! heaven I deem no place of mystic charm,
Languid, or rapturous ;—but a limitless sphere,
Wherein the uncarnate spirit still must dare,
Strive, conquer still,—but with ethereal arms.

“ No lotus-flowers, out-breathing slumber, nod
O'er the clear waters of that world sublime ;
Heights rise on heights, the ransomed soul must climb,
Yearning to view the unveiled face of God.”

5. Sin aggravates the difficulty. It is of the nature of sin to confuse the judgment, to blunt or pervert the perceptions, and especially to dull or even paralyze the moral vision. The uncleansed conscience has lost affinity for God. Our sins arise in unwholesome exhalations, like a cloud to thicken the moral atmosphere and blot the Sun of Righteousness from our sky. It is a marvel that divine grace has found a way to penetrate this thick darkness. The wonders of salvation include this most difficult achievement, which must redound to the glory of the God of all grace. Only infinite skill could have devised and accomplished this. It is a fact that sinners are brought face to face with God, under specific operations of the Holy Spirit. The

light is forced into the darkened heart. Even the hardened sinner is brought so far into acquaintance with the living God as to have the motives of righteousness given vigorous play at the bar of the will, in holy persuasion, and often in effectual calling, uniting the soul to Christ and lifting it into permanent fellowship with the Father and Son.

Let us, then, not murmur. God is as near us as our interests permit. In fact, He is not far away. He merely acts on a different plane. Not the thickness of tissue paper lies between the throbbing heart of humanity and the Father's sympathizing ear and helping hand. His ear is open to our cry, and no cry goes out to Him in vain.



REV. H. W. KETCHUM, D. D.

CHRIST'S CHALLENGE AND QUESTION TO UNBELIEVERS.

BY REV. H. A. KETCHUM, D. D.,

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*Which of you convinceth me of sin? and if I say the truth,
why do ye not believe me? John 8: 46.*

THE words of the text occur in the midst of a heated and exciting discussion. The Pharisees on the one hand were angry, almost if not quite to madness; for Jesus had just said to them, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it."

Rather plain language, this, for these men to hear, who boasted that they were not as other men. They fasted twice in the week and gave tithes of all that they possessed. And Jesus adds: "Because I tell you the *truth*, ye believe me not." "Which of you convinceth *me* of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God hear-

eth God's words ; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." Their anger has now reached white heat, and they answer sharply : " Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil ? "

Jesus was calm and dignified throughout this intense discussion. His language was severe ; but that it was justified, and that the circumstance demanded this severity, who, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, will question for a moment ? " Which of you convinceth me of sin ? " This is surely a remarkable challenge ; and it was a challenge not only to these Pharisees and scribes, but to the whole world, and for all time.

This challenge either justifies men in their unbelief and rejection of Christ, or it condemns them for such unbelief and rejection in the sight of God, angels, and men.

Let us carefully consider, first, what is involved in the challenge, and, secondly, what is involved in the question.

Before proceeding with this discussion, however, permit me to remind you that under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A., this week is sacred to the interests of young men. All churches and all Christians are most earnestly requested to pray for young men ; pray in the closet, at the family altar, in the church, on the street, — everywhere, — without ceasing ; pray for the young men of this and other

lands. Why?—First, for their own salvation, their present and future ; their temporal and eternal welfare.

Secondly, for the nation's good. When the prophet sent word to Ahab that the mighty hosts of the Syrians, under Benhadad, should be delivered into his hands that day, and Ahab inquired by whom, the prophet replied, “By the young men of the princes of the provinces.”

In our country, especially, the people are the power ; and we can be safe and prosperous as a nation only when the voice of the people is an echo of the voice of God. If the voice of the people is the voice of God, then let the people rejoice ; but if not, then let the people mourn.

Thirdly, pray for the young men because upon them, under God, depends the welfare of the church and of the world. Well may the people of God, sitting upon the watch-towers of Zion, inquire as did king David, “Is the young man safe?” For if he be safe, the country, the family, the church, and the *nation* are safe.

And now to return to our theme :—

I. What is involved in the unparalleled challenge which Christ sent forth to the unbelieving Pharisees and an unbelieving world, “Which of you convinceth me of sin?”

| The challenge is broad in its scope—broad as the world and far-reaching as eternity. The word

“sin” is generic. It is a very short word, only three letters, but oh what a tap-root of suffering, sorrow, shame, and self-destruction !

“Of man’s first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death unto the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us and regain the blissful seat,
Sing heavenly Muse.”

“Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.” Hence Jesus Christ claimed to have conformed to and perfectly obeyed the law of God. This was a startling, a stupendous claim. Whether these men could convict Him or not, it was an assumption unprecedented, and unparalleled in the history of mankind, and one that would be most hateful in the sight of heaven unless warranted and justified by eternal truth.

Jesus Christ upon this challenge rests the whole question of His claim to be the promised Messiah ; His claims upon the confidence, the faith, the obedience, and love of men. It was as much as to say : “Convict me of sin and I will admit that you are right, that you are justified in disbelieving me, in rejecting me, in killing me, which you are trying so hard to do. Bring forth your witnesses now, produce your testimony ; summon your ablest counsel ; convict me of one sin and the case shall be yours ;

the world shall know that I am wrong and you are right."

Consider, further, that they were not under the necessity of convicting Christ of some great, heinous, blood-curdling crime. Not at all! One little sin, one failure, one mistake, one act, one word, one hint, intimation, or insinuation that was not in perfect harmony with the law of God, would have been sufficient. And most assiduously did they try to entangle Him in His talk. They were masters at cross-questioning. The question, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar?" involved the whole theory of political economy.

Here, on the one hand, was the whole Jewish Sanhedrim of seventy-one men; yea, more, the whole Jewish nation, with here and there a rare exception. These scribes and Pharisees, moreover, were wise men, learned men, men of ripe erudition and experience. They knew the law and the prophets, and the Psalms as you know the Lord's prayer or the Golden Rule. They were the teachers, the scholars, the critics of their day.

On the other hand, here was a young man only thirty-two years of age. He had been brought up in obscurity in His humble home in Nazareth. So far as we know He never went to school a day in His life. He probably assisted His father, who was a carpenter. Up to the age of thirty, we know

not that He ever traveled five miles from His home, with a single exception, when at the age of twelve He went with His parents to Jerusalem.

True, He was a wonderful observer and lover of nature. Nothing escaped His notice. Birds and animals, flowers and trees, were His companions. He had no intercourse with great men. Thirty years of His life of thirty-three, were spent in the despised town of Nazareth, and in the seclusion of one of its most secluded homes. Even good old Nathanael, in whom there was no guile, questioned whether *any* good thing could come out of Nazareth.

Never did one have such insufficient grounds, from a merely human standpoint, for such stupendous claims ; a teacher of teachers ; a champion of righteousness ; an infallible expounder of inspired truth ; a Man who challenged the united wisdom, cunning, skill, learning, and experience of His generation to find in Him one sin, one fault, one error, one mistake. Stupendous claim, indeed ! Let His enemies, His accusers, stand reverently before this unparalleled challenge.

But this is not all. That challenge has been before the world for almost 1900 years. Many have run to and fro, knowledge has been increased. History has filled mighty archives with its volumes ; prophecy has been unfolded and fulfilled ; nations have arisen to illustrious eminence, only to decline and become extinct. Multiplied lives of Christ

have been written by both friends and foes ; science has unfolded her wonders ; philosophy has dropped its plummet to depths hitherto undreamed of ; — the world throbs with thoughts that thrill the soul with possibilities almost infinitely greater than present realization.

Ten thousand calcium lights are focused upon the life, word, and works of Jesus Christ, and still the challenge remains ; still the humble Man of Nazareth stands before the world's tribunal of the greatest scholars, multiplied from seventy to ten thousand times seventy, saying : “ Which of you convinceth me of sin, of error, of mistake of any kind, form, or feature ? ”

Young men of America, do you appreciate the significance of that challenge ? Why do not our daily papers sometimes give this challenge a place in their columns ? They gladly publish the challenges of pugilists, foot-ball, and base-ball teams ; wheel riders, lawn-tennis players, athletes and pedestrians. Why not publish, and write an editorial occasionally upon the challenge of all challenges, — that means so much to a lost world.

Listen, O wise men of the earth, — lawyers, philosophers, teachers, scholars, scientists, men of thought, of knowledge, of experience, — listen to a challenge that is fraught with incomparable significance to every man, a voice that comes from One who said, “ I am the light of the world,” “ Before

Abraham was, I am ;" "I am the way, the truth, and the life ;" "No man cometh unto the Father but by me ;" "I am the water of life ;" "I am the bread of life ;" "I am the resurrection and the life." Listen to that voice ; it speaks to you, to me, to *all*. "Which of you convinceth me of sin ? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me ?"

Gospel hearer, that challenge has never been met, has never been answered ; never will be, never can be answered. Jesus Christ stands before the world's tribunal to-day unimpeached, and unimpeachable. Not one sin, not one error, not one mistake, not one flaw in His life, character, word, or works, has ever been shown. His word is everlasting, invulnerable truth. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him ; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life ; and the life was the light of men." "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us,"—" *Immanuel*."

II. And now the second question growing out of the text.

What is involved in Christ's question : "And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me ?" To those who *do* believe Christ, and whose daily lives confirm the declaration that they do believe Him, this question, of course, does not apply. Do not

fail, dear brother and sister, to consider well what such belief implies and involves. Obedience, love, loyalty to, and cheerful service for Christ, will and must follow such belief. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have *believed*."

There are reasons to fear, however, that were Jesus speaking to this audience to-day, He would be compelled to say as He did when preaching in the synagogue at Capernaum, "But there are some of you that believe not."

If that be so, dear hearer, let me press upon you the question of our text: "If I speak the truth, why do ye not believe me?"

It surely cannot be because truth is not on the side of Christ. "*I am the truth*," are the words of Christ; and for nearly 1900 years that claim has not been disproved. Does not unbelief of Christ involve a lack of candor, of honor, of truthfulness? Jesus said: "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

Not to believe Jesus Christ, then, is as much as to say that a lie is better than the truth. Is any young man prepared to say that? Do not forget that one lie has swept this earth with a flood-tide of sorrow, suffering, and shame for six thousand years. If there be anything which God and angels hate above another, and which men ought to hate with superlative hatred, it is a lie. The

very quintessence of devilry, of infamy, the very breath of demons is a lie; it is most foreign to heaven, and most congenial to hell, the bastille of the lost.

Not to believe Christ is to join with those hypocritical Pharisees in saying to Christ that He has a devil; for God's Word declares that, "He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar." And Jesus Christ, while upon the earth, was "God manifest in the flesh." With deepest solemnity and reverence it needs to be said right here that the alternative is inevitable. Jesus Christ was either the Son of God, the God of truth, or like Elymas He was a child of the devil, who is the father of lies.

O young men, is there any question in your minds as to which side of this question demands your confidence, and deserves your belief? Listen once more to the voice of Him who spake as never man spake; who spake as one having authority and not as the scribes; who "spake and it was done," who "commanded and it stood fast;" "who speaks, and eternity, filled with His voice, re-echoes the praise of her Lord."

"Which of you convinceth me of sin?" "And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" Dear young men of this congregation, are you prepared to answer the question which Jesus Christ lays before you in the text? Let me earnestly ask you to

be as honest, as manly, as unequivocal in answering this question, as you would be were the question submitted to you : Which is better, the truth or a lie ?

That indeed is the real significance of this latter part of the text. "If I say the truth," says Jesus Christ,—and the verdict of the world after two thousand years' trial is that Jesus Christ does say the truth,—“why do ye not believe me?” Are you, then, ready to say, “I *do* believe Jesus Christ?” If so, I praise God for it, and rejoice with you.

I beg of you to consider well what such belief implies, and involves,—immediate committal of yourself to Jesus Christ to be saved, and acceptance of Him as your Saviour. It involves, also, prompt and perpetual obedience to Jesus Christ as your King. Then labor ; for love and loyalty to Christ will inevitably follow, as your chief desire and supreme delight. May God help you to recognize the obligation, and to meet it manfully for Christ's sake. Amen.

A LIFE RETROSPECT.

BY REV. HENRY COLLIN MINTON, D. D.,

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I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. John 17:4.

THE life of Jesus is now drawing near to its close. His errand is almost performed ; His mission is almost accomplished ; His work almost done. He turns away from His confidential conversation with His disciples to a more sacred interview with His Father. Alone, He pours out His soul in prayer to God. He finds sweet relief and welcome rest in communion with Him. No man understands Him. He is alone in all the world. God only sees Him as He is, and His heart is filled with confidence and rising courage as He speaks to Him in prayer.

Men misunderstand Him ; the world hates Him ; the Jews are about to crucify Him ; He treads the wine-press alone, and this very solitude would tend to freeze up the warm fountains of human affection in His breast.

What holy joy there is to Him in knowing that God's eye sees Him through and through, God's ear



REV. H. C. MINTON, D. D.

hears His earnest cry, and, whatever man may say, God's favor rests upon His consecrated life !

So it is that the text gives us the calm retrospect of a well-spent life. No accent of sadness, no tone of complaining, no suggestion of gloom ; thirty-three short years and the end comes. Evening shades fall at noon-time. Death claims the vigor of His manhood, the strength of His courage, the prime fruit of His life. Well and good ! "I have glorified thee on the earth ; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

These words present to us the two needful elements in every true Christian life. Our Lord was divine, but He was also human. Our life should be in a thousand ways like His,—a life of business, a life of usefulness, a life of trust, a life of love.

The first of these two elements is that of glorifying God. "I have glorified thee on the earth." Every noble life contributes to the Father's glory. The light must *so* shine as to lead men to glorify not us, but our Father which is in heaven. We should be humble finger-boards along the ways of life to point men's thoughts and guide men's feet toward God.

Nor is this a strange notion when we reflect a moment. He made us and not we ourselves. The breath of life is the gift of God. Every good thing is of His bounty. Every energy we possess, every instrument we employ,—everything is His, not

ours. The creature is created to do the Creator's will, and in this simple truth is wrapped up the true philosophy of every human life.

But what is it to glorify God? What is His glory? The Westminster Fathers said, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." Here we dip beyond our depth, and rise beyond our height. God's glory is too great, too grand a thought for you and me. In the abstract we can know nothing of the essential glory of the infinite and the absolute. But in the fields and forces of nature, in the doings and developments of Providence as traced on the pages of the past, and in the marvels and triumphs of redeeming grace, we find always and everywhere that the glory of the living God is set forth as that which is the highest good of all His creatures.

I know that I am now groping amid mysteries too deep and dark. I know that no man can comprehend the thought, or compass the purpose of the Almighty. I know that humility does well to seal her lip in the presence of problems which no finite wisdom can grasp or solve. Still, amid the dazzling flashes of ancient Sinai, by the silent Shekinah lights of the tabernacle and the temple, and in the blinding mists that envelop the cross uplifted on the brow of Calvary, we find the glory of the Lord ever in mercy condescending to identify itself with the highest well-being of His creat-

ures, and lighting up, with Heaven's radiant beams, the lives and destinies of His lonely children.

I know not how, I know not why, sin has come in. "An enemy hath done this." Death invades the joyous realms of life. The songs of joy are sadly mingled with the sighs of sorrow. The yawning grave waits to entrap the child of mirth, and darker destinies await the future of the wicked and hopelessly impenitent. God knows best. Certainly it is a tangled web now. Perhaps sin is needful for us to resist if we would attain the highest virtue. God only knows; but we do know that on every page of this blessed Book, He invites and urges all men to come to Him. He calls the thirsty to come to Him for drink, the hungry to come to Him for meat, the weary to come to Him for rest, and by countless proofs and signs that he who runs may read and mistake not, He always links the highest glory with our highest good.

The catechism is right. To glorify God is to enjoy Him. Heaven is not good at the expense of Earth, nor Eternity better by making Time worse. The God of the Christian's Bible is no Moloch that gloats upon the sufferings and sorrows of his creatures. "Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die?" God's desire is that all men should be saved.

Drop the mysteries of the infinite, my brethren, and we find the lives of simple duty here. Leave the transcendent for this once to the

Emersons and the Carlyles, and we glean a luminous lesson from this thought. We glorify God when we do our best. We glorify God when we honor our conscience. We glorify God when we reach our highest. Then we magnify every opportunity and squander nothing. The tiny flower glorifies God with its sweet and modest fragrance. The mighty mountain glorifies God in its towering and majestic grandeur. The merry bird glorifies God with its lovely plumage and dainty song.

The trees in the field glorify God with their fragrant blossoms to-day and their loads of golden fruit to-morrow. The myriad stars in the midnight astronomies of the sky glorify God and show forth His handiwork. Every creature glorifies its Creator by being that and doing that for which it was created. Put any man in the right place ; give him the right work ; and in that place and by that work that man is glorifying God. Let his hand but follow its cunning, let his heart but obey its longings with a worthy purpose and a lofty, unselfish aim, and God's glory is the end that will be secured.

But linked with this one element is one other : "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And yet this is not another but only a different side of the same. Jesus glorified the Father by doing the work which the Father gave Him to do. Here is one of the grandest truths the mind

of man can reflect upon. A man's work is worthy of himself only when it is God's work. The Son of Mary lived a perfect life because He perfectly did his Father's work. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will O my God." God gives every man in this world a work to do. The breath of life is a commission to work. A lazy man is a barren fig-tree,— "Why cumbereth it the ground?" No man lives who has not a work to do, and no other man can do his work; so that if he leaves it undone, it is undone to all eternity.

The first condition of doing this work well is to realize that God has given us this work to do. Talk of success in life! Here is the secret and well-spring of all true success. The man who is wholly dependent upon God is the only man in all the world who can afford to be wholly independent of all other men. Money is nothing, honor is nothing, fame is nothing when compared with this consciousness every day that we are pegging away, pegging away, and pegging away at the work God has given us to do. It matters not so much what it is. To be sure, it must be clean and honest and honorable, and in itself a blessing and not a curse. But the motive gives dignity to the service. Plow the soil, only plow it deep and well. Measure

calico, only measure thirty-six inches to every yard. Pound the anvil, only take care that you pound out something. Bake bread, only bake it well and make it good. Teach your pupils, only see to it that you teach them something worth the learning. Preach your sermon, only keep quiet until you have made sure that your sermons are not your own but the very truth of God. This, that, anything,—only make sure that you are doing the work God would have you do, and then be sure that all will be well. I pity the man who is at the wrong work in life,—a fish out of water, a bird with clipped wing essaying to fly through the air! The carpenter in the pulpit, the preacher at the anvil, the lawyer with the yard-stick, the merchant on the bench! it is hard to glorify God and do His work with such a misfit as that. It is hard to glorify God by doing another man's work.

You may say that I am degrading the sacredness of the text ; but am I? It is true, the word of our blessed Lord was awfully sacred, transcendently sublime ; but with us life is a most matter-of-fact work-a-day thing. Not many of us are called to lay the foundations of an empire ; not many of us are called to be missionaries to the heathen or even ministers of the gospel. Our religion is valueless unless it comes down to the level of our daily life. And, indeed, our lives are dignified by this consciousness within that we are doing God's work, day

after day. Let the years come and go, let life bring its changes of sorrow and joy, let the seasons roll on in quick and swift succession, I am doing all I can do, as God's pathway opens up before me like a sunbeam from the sky. The seal of His call is fixed within my breast. Let men bear or forbear, let the world find fault or praise, let evil report or good report go forth, I know my work. There is no misunderstanding with my employer ; I am not groping in the mists ; I am obeying a distinct call that rings out in my soul, and I am following in the footsteps of Him who glorified His Father and finished the work God had given Him to do.

Brethren, that conviction may well defy a solid world. That consciousness can smile at all the gold in the bowels of the Sierras. There is blessed and complete abandonment of self to God in that. If I succeed, the glory is His, not mine. If I fail, the responsibility of my failure is with Him that placed me here. The results are His. And I may justly claim the wages He has taught us to expect : "Give us this day our daily bread." I spend the strength it gives me in Thy service. I know no other service than Thine own. I am not my own, I am bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ.

Do you say this is too high for us — we cannot attain to it ? Not so ; my brethren, God's name is Immanuel, — "God with us." He called Abram from

ancient Ur of the Chaldees to go forth to a land whither he knew not ; and because he in simplicity obeyed, he became Abraham, the Father of the faithful. He called the shepherd boy from his flocks on the plains of Bethlehem ; and obeying, David became the reigning King of Israel. His angel appeared to humble Mary in her lowly home at Nazareth ; and because his wondrous promise was believed, the Jewish Virgin became the blessed among women — the mother of the world's Redeemer. Saul of Tarsus was prostrated by a bolt of God's lightning from the heavens, and with sightless orbs the chastened persecutor could only ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Brother man, we must have this call to do God's work or we are a failure, a miserable failure, and nothing but a failure in life. No man is worth a farthing till God's call wakes him up. The reason why there are so many worthless failures all about us, the reason why the world is cursed with so many blighted careers and blasted lives on every side, is simply because men's ears do not listen to the call that comes from God, men's eyes are closed against the heavenly vision that awaits their seeing, men's hearts do not respond to the summons that is voiced in the inviting field, the ripening harvest, and the heavenly reward that, in this famed age above all other ages, tempts manhood and womanhood for their best.

But there is a tone of pathos in the words of the text. Thirty-three years round out a short life indeed. And yet our Saviour could say, "I have finished the work." Biography is measured by deeds and not by years. His work was done, His mission was ended. Some men have been said to live too long, and to have undone in part the good that in earlier years they had accomplished. What matters it, my friends, when the summons comes, if only our work is done and well done? Ah! what a reward is there in such a retrospect as this! Death never comes too early to the man who is at his work. God makes no mistakes. The promoted workman does not suffer, and we may trust God to take care of His work.

Some men, by God's grace, seem to win their reward sooner than others. Death seems sad if it breaks in upon an unfinished work; but who knows? Only let us be about our Father's business; only let us follow in the footsteps of our Lord in the shadows of the valley as well as in the sunshine of the hilltops; only let us do with our might what our hands find to do; and then, whether the end come late in life, or on the threshold of life's maturer years, or in the dewy morn of early youth, we may say with the blessed Christ himself, in the consciousness of His favor and the assurance of His reward, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

In a silent, lonely country in the far-away heathen city of Lucknow, among the historic sceneries of western India, by the old residence which was blasted by shells and ruined by the fearful Sepoy rebellion of 1857, I have stood by the grave of Sir Henry Lawrence, who was in command of the English forces during those long and trying weeks,—a brave soldier, a faultless commander, a Christian hero. A plain marble slab marks his resting-place beneath the sod, and the only epitaph I found upon his tomb was that which he himself had dictated : “Here lies Henry Lawrence. He tried to do his duty.” No title with tawdry honor adorns his name. No showy parade of his brilliant acts or brave achievements,—none of that. Modest as it is, could there be a nobler tribute to a valiant Christian hero? And, best of all, the whole world knows that it is true. God grant that, by His grace, we may all so live that when some eye in the now misty future years shall read the inscription on our tombs, it may have been inscribed by the hands of affectionate gratitude and in the eulogy of simple truth, “By God’s grace, he tried to do his duty.”



REV. ROBERT MACKENZIE, D. D.

VICARIOUS SUFFERING.

A DEDICATION SERMON BY REV. ROBERT
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The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.
Rev. 13 : 8.

You have long and practically considered the outward form and meaning of this church. In these it eloquently speaks for itself. Let me to-day turn your attention to its inner purpose and meaning, to the foundation on which it rests ; to the central truth of which it is the exponent. For this text leads us to the central theme of the gospel which is here to be preached — *vicarious suffering*.

Underneath the Sierra Nevada there runs from north to south a vein of gold-bearing quartz, which miners call the mother-lode. Here and there along the range it appears on the surface. Beginning at that point they dig down and find the precious metal. Vicarious suffering runs beneath all the Bible as a mother-lode. In this text it

risers to the surface with a slope and trend that will lead us to the foundation of all saving truth.

The word "vicarious" means one acting or suffering for another. We as Christians depend for our salvation, not on anything we have done or suffered, but on something which has been vicariously done and suffered for us by the Lord Jesus Christ, "the Lamb slain."

As vicarious sacrifice is the mother-lode of the Bible so the cross of Christ is the richest vein in the range. It is the one place where it becomes conspicuous and certain. Prophets and priests had long studied the ways of God with man, and knew that somewhere and at some time the divine purpose and method of redemption would rise into definite and abiding shape. Croppings of the great truth were constantly found to cheer their search and to buoy their hopes. But these all died not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them. But now he hath "made known unto us the mystery of his will ; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather in one all things in Christ."

That which prophet and priest had for age after age looked to see and had not seen, at last appeared in the cross of Jesus. The mother-lode definitely and conspicuously revealed itself in the sight of all men. When Paul and John speak of it, it is with the

rapture of those who discover something for which men have long looked. Abraham and Moses and Isaiah had watched the growing purpose of God as men watch some slow growing tree, wondering what flower and fruit it would finally bear, but died before the century plant came to the blossom. Paul and John, however, found the great plant in full bloom in the cross of Christ. Henceforth their words are all eloquent with it, their theology is based on it, their faith clings to it, their enthusiasm is awakened only by it. They determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. The cross was the final solution of the whole problem of God's purpose and method in man's salvation. But there are those who stumble at this central doctrine. They do not become Christians because, they say, they cannot accept this truth of vicarious suffering. They ask why there should be a Bible, a Saviour, and a cross? Why should the salvation of one be by the sacrifice of another? Why should there be the tragedy of Calvary, with its agony and darkness and earthquake and blood, simply to lead a soul to the worship of God? In a word, why should the salvation of one be by the suffering of another? This seems to them to be quite aside from the natural order of things and the ordinary experience of men.

The answer to that question is found in the fact that the cross of Christ is not altogether unique ;

not something entirely different from the preceding course of God's method in earthly history ; but the full development of a process that, according to our text, began with the foundation of the world. The cross is not something foisted in upon the divine course of events, but something which grew up in accordance with its basal law ; not a post, but a tree which has its roots wrapped about all great events in earthly history and its tap-root deeply imbedded in the center and core of the world. The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world.

Let us then trace the roots of the cross to the "foundation of the world." The metaphysicians in theology would say that this word "world" means that the cross has its roots in the eternal purpose of God. Doubtless that is the ultimate fact. But we might get swamped trying to follow these giants through that metaphysical side of the theme. I prefer to illustrate it from a side more within our reach.

I. LET THIS MATERIAL EARTH be the "world" of our text. The roots of the cross go to the foundation of it. For a long time the students of nature were busy with the circumference of the earth ; eager men traveled over continents to discover new rivers or mountains ; or crossed seas to discover new continents. In our day it is the center of the earth, the beginning of it, the "foundations of the

world," that are the object of their eagerness. In the course of their discoveries in that direction some of them have assiduously attacked the Cross.

Finding it yonder set up in the rocks about Jerusalem they have dug about it to undermine it and let it fall as the last symbol of superstition. They have given repeated warnings to us who have taken refuge in it to stand from under, lest we be crushed beneath its falling weight. But the deeper they have gone, the more they have revealed the massive quality of the roots by which it stands, roots that so far, penetrate deeper than their farthest search.

Let the more common rocks, those nearest the surface, be "the foundation of the world." Let us examine them, and let us begin right where the Roman soldier is digging the hole in which to set up the cross. As we do so, we find it is limestone. But what is limestone? Examine it and you will find that it is a grave, a cemetery, filled with myriad shells of extinct life. Take a piece of it and draw a line on the blackboard. Under a microscope every grain of that white line is a skeleton. All that rock was once instinct with life that roamed the sea in pearly shells, or crept in the ooze of oceans all unknown. They filled their purpose, died, and fell to the bottom of those ancient oceans; and thus for years untold and in multitudes beyond our arithmetic to number, until in the fullness of His time God upheaved the sea bottom, and it became

dry land. And that limestone appears not only here and there, but all over the earth. The great globe itself which we inhabit is all one vast burying ground, thick with the dust of departed millions.

There are places where it appears more prominently, and one of these is the mountains round about Jerusalem, where the Roman soldier dug the hole for the cross of Christ. Standing there by that soldier as he throws up the crumbling fragments, we can say with the poet:—

“Tell me, thou dust beneath my feet,—
Thou dust that once had breath,—
Tell me how many mortals meet
In this small hill of death?

“By wafting winds and flooding rains,
From ocean, earth, and sky
Collected, here the frail remains
Of slumbering millions lie.”

Thus living beings struggled, suffered, and died in numbers and through ages utterly beyond our ability to count. With what purpose? Was all this life and struggle and suffering in idle wantonness? Was it chance? Was it pain without any worthy purpose? That would be an awful doctrine to teach or believe. Nay, every tiny shell had its purpose; every ephemeral form had its work; every pang of suffering had its meaning; every agony of death in that limestone looked to some

great result. What was it? Stand in front of any sea cliff and read the answer. You will see that one age of life came and suffered and died to make a fitting platform on which another could accomplish its mission, and fill its destiny; and *that* struggled and died to make another possible; and thus from surface down to the foundation of the world through not only one or two, but in some places, a thousand strata.

Standing there we see that each succeeding form of life could live and carry out its work only as some preceding life suffered and died for it. The law of that cliff is one for another and all for man. These dying myriads make the soil of his Eden, the cement for his building, the marble for his art. You cannot make a grain of your wheat grow unless you plant it in the mouldering remains of some life that died to give it growth. Your wheat, your barley, your fruit, your flowers, are all planted in blood; they live and grow and are beautiful only as they send their roots down and take hold of the vicarious suffering of other lives that died that they might live.

Men may object to the doctrine of vicarious suffering in theology; in nature it is put beyond doubt by that limestone rock. Men may object to secure the life of the soul in this way; it is beyond doubt that there is no other way of getting bread for the body.

The air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, the raiment wherewith we are clothed, are all fraught with vicarious suffering. Why, then, should it be thought a thing incredible with you that by the same law, even the blood of another, man comes by the bread of life for his soul? Hence as we see them planting in that limestone rock, outside of Jerusalem, not a grain of wheat for man's physical life, but a cross on which one more vicarious death will take place, in the interests of his soul, we see that that cross, with the sufferings and death experienced on it, is not aside from God's purpose in nature; not something foisted in upon, but one with all the mysterious dealings of God written all through and down into the rocks,—the fitting climax of a process that has its beginning in the foundation of the world.

The first fossil that lies in that first stratum is a type of Christ. Every layer that rises above another is looking for this crowning death that will complete the purpose, that will justify and give it meaning.

If man had continued innocent, the sufferings and death of these lowly creatures had been enough to meet the wants of his innocence; they had made his garden and his home. If man had remained holy, that limestone rock about Jerusalem had never been rent to receive a cross; but man sinned, and "it is not possible that the blood

of bulls and goats should take away sins." Man's needs go farther than bread and fruit and flowers can supply. Something else, something better is necessary; and that something better comes by the same law, by the same path of vicarious suffering, even that of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world.

In placing the cross in that limestone rock, then, we see God laying the foundations of the earth, not only for man's use and comfort, but also for an altar on which the great Sacrifice for sin might be offered. And all the suffering myriads of life would surely miss of their full meaning if *they only* had died; that would leave man only half redeemed. It would supply the needs of the body and leave his soul to perish. Hence the cross of Christ, rooted in that rock of death, is the grand continuation, the fitting climax of all the vicarious suffering which has gone on from the foundation of the world.

Infidelity would have to remove the thousand strata of that rock before it could undermine the cross, or get rid of the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice. For not only on the text, but on every shell is written, "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

Shall we go deeper? Shall it be claimed that this is only the surface and not the foundation of the world? Very well, let us go deeper. We soon get away from the limestone, but not from the

roots of the cross. Shall it be the carboniferous rocks that are the foundation of the world? *They* are old forests and the fossil remains of primitive plants that lived and grew and gave up their lives to sustain the world of animal life. They lived and died to make it possible for others to live. It is still the mother-lode of vicarious suffering. We are not yet below the roots of the cross. All this power that drives the wheels of our industries; all the genial fires that save us from the rigors of winter, are possible only as these forests lived and died for us.

The same law of vicarious sacrifice goes down through all the black coal fields. On some of these black rocks we can see the forms of ferns and other plants; but if we looked closer, we could see the form of a cross. As they burn in our fires we can see strange things in the blaze; but if we looked closer, we could see in every flame the words of our text, "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." You would have to go countless feet below Calvary, and remove all carboniferous rocks before you could undermine the cross or get away from the doctrine of the text.

Deeper yet? Very well. Down until we strike the aqueous rocks, and we are in the presence of mountains thunder-riven, broken by frosts, disintegrated by fierce storms, washed down by floods, sorted and re-sorted by seas; giving their life to

make a soil for the following forests. It is the same law — one for another. On every bit of sandstone we read, “The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

Deeper yet until we come to the igneous rocks? Down then, until the pick strikes through into the very core of the earth. We see a fierce struggle of chemical elements gradually yielding up their heat and first fiery life to form the solid crust on which all the higher life of earth depends for its continuance. It is the same law of surrender, of sacrifice. All through the heaving mass, lying there at the foundation of the world, deeper than the efforts of man have yet gone, we see wrapped the roots of the cross. In every cooling wrinkle of those exhausted fires we read, “The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” The oldest fact in nature is that of vicarious suffering.

II. LET THE LIFE AND HISTORY OF MAN be the “world” of the text. The roots of the cross go to the foundation of it.

When God laid the foundation of the material world for man, and when man appeared thereon, God pronounced it “very good.” If man had remained innocent, there would have been no more suffering or dying; but man fell and had to win his way back through that word “subdue.” Through measureless struggle and suffering man *has* subdued the earth; has upreared fabrics of education, of

legislation, of religion, and has made not an uncomfortable dwelling-place of this rude earth. We are here to-day in the enjoyment of law, of liberty, and of religion; but will you tell me which of these privileges, so dear to us, so necessary to our well-being came by any other path than that of vicarious suffering? Men come to this continent with speed and safety only because thousands of sailors have struggled with the storms, suffered the privations, and died in the abyss of the Atlantic.

Every ship sails through the blood of men who suffered and died for us. Your way to Heaven may not lie through vicarious suffering, your way to this continent certainly does. And coming to this continent, we build our homes and cultivate our fields in safety and prosperity; but before we could do that, armies of pioneers had to die of malaria, of Indian arrows, and wild beasts. The paths through our forests that are steel-laid railroads were first marked out by graves.

We are here in the enjoyment of many privileges as citizens. They are possible only because armies have marched and counter-marched and made centuries ring with the blows of many battles. The most pathetic sight I ever witnessed was that of the veterans of the Grand Army marching past, bearing the old battle-flags; flags torn and tattered and riddled with shot; flags that in their dim colors seemed to be still carrying the smoke of battle;

flags that in their stains are still eloquent with the sufferings of men that carried them to the front, and wrapped them about their bodies in death. Our schools, our court-houses, our halls of legislature, are possible only because brave men, all through the years, were willing to carry such in and out of the bloody conflict. Such is the law of our civilization ; such is the price of our freedom. All over those flags, as they passed, you could read, "I set my face like a flint ;" "His visage was marred more than any man ;" "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." All those faces upturned in death on all battle-fields, are gazing not on dumb stars in an indifferent heaven, but looking and waiting for the coming death on the cross to give their suffering and death justification and meaning.

We are here in the enjoyment of religious privileges, none daring to make us afraid. You are under this roof to-day in undisputed religious liberty, only because back of us there were Christian heroes and martyrs willing to resist the power of despotism and superstition, and die in the attempt to wring our religious liberty from their unwilling grasp. I have stood where eighteen thousand lie in martyr's graves to make the Presbyterian Church what it is. And looking from that place, every hill and heatherbell in sight was baptized with the tears of women and the blood of men who wept and bled

for you and for this church. Men may refuse the mansions of heaven on the ground of vicarious suffering; there is confessedly no other ground on which to build the mansions of earth. It lies at the foundation of every privilege of life. You cannot take up a book to read, nor roll up a ballot to vote; you cannot sit down in a pew in church, nor walk the streets of the city or the green fields of the country in safety, except some one has gone before you to purchase the privilege with his blood.

Beneath us lies the limestone rock that lived and died to make our homes and fields possible; overlying that rock there is a layer of human life, sacrificed to make our fields *free* and our homes *safe*. Why, then, should it be a thing incredible with you that our souls should rest for their immortal privileges on the sufferings and death of another? Surely since we can trace in the arrangement of dead matter, of organic life, and in all the events of the human world one continuous system of vicarious suffering, carried on for the well-being of others, the cross of Christ, by which our souls are saved, is not something foisted in upon the nature of things, but something eternally rooted in it,—the continuation and fitting climax of all that came before. Infidelity would have to remove the crust of the earth and quench the interior fires, would then have to destroy every record of human history before it could undermine the cross, or get beneath

its roots ; for on every page of history is written, "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The innermost fact of history is that of vicarious suffering.

III. LET THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF MAN be the "world" of the text ; let the Bible be the exponent of that life. The roots of the cross go to the foundation of it.

All this long sweep of history, of poetry, of prophecy, of ritual, of sacrifice, is sometimes thought to be too large and complicated for our religious necessities. There are those who would cut it all out except the Sermon on the Mount. But just as God has left all the record of early storms of fire and rain ; all the successive layers of the life that struggled and suffered beneath the rocks of Calvary, so has He preserved all the layers of moral struggle, all the successive eras of revelation and of worship, that we might see them finding meaning and fulfillment in the cross. The Bible without the cross would be a plant without a blossom, a tree without fruit. The cross without this Old Testament would be a carnation blossom without the plant, or root, or soil that gave it form and development. The cross is not something different from all the Old Testament, but the continuation and climax of it. Isaiah's eloquence is awakened only as he anticipates the cross ; David's harp sounds its sweetest harmonies only as it is

waked by the coming of the cross; the laws of Moses, the ritual, all the incense waved in the temple, all the blood sprinkled on the mercy seat, all the lambs led to the altar, have meaning only as they point to the Lamb of God. All the captivities, the sufferings, the wanderings, of the Hebrews, all the story of their Joshuas, their Davids, are answered only in the coming of the great Deliverer. Down through all this Book the cross sends its roots until, in the first page of it, at the very foundation of this moral world, you find it written, "The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Christ himself settled this question when, on the way to Emmaus, he overtook the two disciples doubting that the Jesus whom they had known was the Redeemer of the world, because He had died on the cross. The cross was to them, as to many since, a stumbling block. "O fools and slow to believe," said He, "ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." The Saviour, in His teaching after the resurrection, lifted up the layers of the Bible to show the disciples that the roots of His cross went all the way down to the foundations of it.

You cannot take the cross out of the Old Testament without rending apart every book and every page in every book. You cannot take the Old Tes-

tament from under the cross without cutting away its roots and letting it fall a meaningless thing among the rubbish of the world. The vicarious sacrifice offered on that cross is the climax of the whole book. Not only here, but in every part of it is written, "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The deepest doctrine of the Bible is that of vicarious suffering.

We see then why the cross is the one theme of the Christian gospel; why it is the enthusiasm of Paul, the poetry of John. We see why it has been the glowing theme of the Christian church, that by which it has swayed the thoughts and secured the affections of men. We see why it is the one theme to which you dedicate this house, and which is to fill it from year to year with sacred eloquence.

I have said these things at length for the consolation and enthusiasm of you who have fled to this truth of the vicarious sufferings of Jesus Christ for your own salvation, and have reared this house as a guiding light to all in similar peril seeking similar safety. I want to feel myself, and to cause you to feel that in laying hold of the cross, we have hold of that which goes to the foundation of the Bible, of history, of nature, and of the eternal purpose of God. We need ask no man's pardon for believing in vicarious suffering.

When God plants a cedar tree on the stormy brow of Lebanon, He gives it mighty roots (the word "cedar" means a root), roots that take hold of

the rocks and that penetrate through the crevices thereof, widening and pushing the lateral rocks aside, seeking as it were to lay their grip around the very foundation of the world. You can take shelter under it with safety. It will fall only when the solid Lebanon is upturned.

The cross is not two pieces of wood hastily knocked together and set up in a hole in the earth for a brief and temporary purpose ; it is a tree, it is God's rooted cedar. Not till memory of the Bible has disappeared from the earth ; the records of history reversed ; the strata of the rocks proved a lie, and God's eternal purpose found capricious, need we fear its fall. The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world.



REV. W. H. LANDON.

OURSELVES SINNERS.

BY PROF. WARREN H. LANDON, D. D.,

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But are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God? 2 Chron. 28:10.

BEAUTIFUL things are often found in unexpected and out of the way places. We ordinarily go to the cultivated garden for rare and beautiful flowers ; but they are sometimes found by the traveler in places that have never before been trodden by the foot of man. They have bloomed on, shedding their fragrance upon the air, with no one to admire them but the God who made them. So in the broad field of Bible truth, for the field is so broad that it takes man long to traverse it, there are beautiful things in out of the way places, that are rarely or never met with by many Bible readers and students. It will be admitted that what we may term precious passages are more numerous in the New Testament and in the Psalms than in any other portion of the Bible. Probably the great majority of sermons is preached from texts selected from the

New Testament. This is as it should be ; for in the Old Testament we have only foreshadowings of good things, while in the New we have the good things themselves. In the Old Testament Christ is promised. In the New, Christ is come. So the New Testament furnishes the richest pastures for the sheep and lambs of Christ to feed in regularly. But into the rougher, rockier, and what some might call dryer places of the Old Testament, we should come occasionally, for in them we find some precious and helpful truths. The books of Chronicles may not be on the whole very interesting reading, but in this passage in which our text is found there is a beautiful foreshadowing of gospel truth. I confess that though I have read it many times, and this text has caught my eye and plunged itself into my heart, I have never noticed before how this whole account has in it beautiful foreshadowings of some of the teachings of Christ.

Dr. Thomson, in his work entitled, "The Land and the Book," says of the event recorded here, "It is one of the most humane and beautiful actions to be found in the entire records of ancient or modern warfare." It was the time of ruinous dissensions between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Judah had greatly sinned against their God, and the time of terrible punishment drew nigh. Pekah, the last able or powerful monarch of Israel, entered into a confederacy with Rezin,

king of Damascus, and invaded Judea. In the battle that followed, Judah lost 120,000 men, while 200,000 men, women, and children were captured and carried away. These prisoners were led away to Samaria. As the armed host with their great army of prisoners and great spoil came to Samaria, a prophet of the Lord, named Oded, met them and said: "Behold, because the Lord God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage that reacheth up unto heaven. And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bondmen and bondwomen unto you; but are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord our God?" Then certain of the noble men, princes of Israel, rose up and said the captives should not be brought in. The soldiers yielded, and left the captives and the spoil with the princes. They took the spoil and with it clothed and shod the captives, gave them to eat and to drink, set the feeble ones upon asses and returned them to Jericho to their brethren. Milman, in his history of the Jews, calls this "a beautiful and refreshing incident in this gloomy and savage part of the annals of Israel." We may call it an early illustration of the gospel precept, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink."

Three needs are suggested by the interrogation of the text: 1. The need of self-examination; 2. The

need of forgiveness ; 3. The need of charity and a forgiving spirit toward others.

I. The Need of Self-examination. One needs to examine himself, or he will surely overlook not merely some little blemishes in his own character, but some very large sins. It is one of the peculiarities of our fallen human nature that we can see faults in others and be unconscious of greater faults in ourselves. In the event recorded in the passage before us, it is evident that the children of Judah are receiving punishment for their sins. When Israel gained this signal victory over Judah, and marched off with a great multitude of prisoners and a great abundance of spoils, they may have congratulated themselves on their good fortune, and some of them may have said, "The children of Judah have received the due reward of their sins ;" for they had sinned greatly against God. And yet how much better were Israel? Had they not also become an idolatrous nation? Had they not also sinned greatly against the Lord their God? And yet they led away their 200,000 captives to make bondmen and bondwomen of them as if they were a holier people. But a prophet of the Lord appeared upon the scene and put the somewhat startling question, "But are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God?"

A prophet of the Lord is often needed with trumpet-voice to call the attention of people to

their sins. As we read in Isaiah, "Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." It is such an easy matter to be mistaken about one's own sins, or to overlook them. One of the most marked illustrations of this in the Bible is found in the history of David. He had committed a most outrageous sin. And yet it had not apparently disturbed him. He did not seem conscious of the greatness of his offense against both man and God. But the prophet of the Lord was on hand. He visited David and told him a touching story about a poor man who had but one little ewe lamb. It grew up with his children, and ate with them, and was like one of them. In the same city was a rich man who had large herds and flocks. A traveler came to visit the rich man; and instead of taking one of his own large herd, he sent and took the poor man's only lamb and had it slain and dressed for the stranger. David did not see himself in this parable, did not see that it was just what he had been doing in causing the death of his brave soldier, Uriah the Hittite, that he might have his beautiful wife Bathsheba. He did not think of himself and his own meanness. But he grew very angry when he heard about this rich man who had taken the poor man's lamb. It was an outrage that such a thing should occur in his kingdom. The man should restore

what he had taken, fourfold, and then should be put to death because he had no pity. To his great astonishment the prophet pointed his finger at him and said, "King David, thou art the man." Though his own sin was as a mountain, he could not see it until his eyes were thus suddenly opened by the touching parable of the prophet.

Dr. Joseph Parker speaks thus of Peter, when Peter was asking Christ how many times he should forgive his brother if that brother sinned against him: "'How oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?' 'My brother sin against me?' Just like us! It never occurred to Peter that he might sin against his brother. Standing there in conscious perfectness of character and disposition, will and thought, godly man, serene and most pious soul, he wonders how often he has to play the great man by forgiving somebody else! He starts from a wrong point. The question is not an innocent one, it is steeped in guilt if he did but know it; but who ever assumes his own peccability? who ever starts the question from the possibility that he may be the offender?"

It is therefore so easy, even for one who professes to be a godly man, to overlook his own sins, that we can easily see the need of self-examination. The apostle says, "*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.*" When sins are talked of, when sinners are condemned or

prayed for, it would be well for us to inquire, "Are there not with us, even with us, sins against the Lord our God?"

II. The Need of Forgiveness. Let this question now come home to *you*. Why not to *you*? "Are there not with *you*, even with *you*, sins against the Lord your God?" Can you not think of sins that you have committed? You can very readily think of the other man's sins, the other woman's faults. You have talked about them the past week. You have read about sins and crimes, and commented much upon the condition of society. You have read until you have grown heart-sick and wished the press would give us fewer columns or fill them with more wholesome news. But we are talking about you now. Would you murder? Most assuredly not, you answer. But we read in God's word that "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." How far toward murder would you go in the way of hating your neighbor or your brother? Read through the ten commandments. If you have not broken every one of them, have you not made some approach thereto? Sober, honest thought will bring us all to confess that we have sinned against God and in His sight. Now if we are a part of the humanity of whom it is said, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God," what are we going to do? Are we going on to the end of life "coming short"? Are we going on into eternity "com-

ing short"? The Scripture plainly declares what is the result of unforgiven sin. "The wages of sin is death." Therefore if there are with us, even with us, sins against the Lord our God, one of our greatest needs is that of forgiveness. And there is forgiveness with God, "forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Forgiveness is needed, and forgiveness is to be had with the blessedness which follows. For we read not, Blessed is the man who has never sinned; but, Blessed is the man who, having sinned, finds forgiveness, even as the psalmist says, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

III. The Need of Charity and a Forgiving Spirit. We are in no condition to be severe upon others. Judah had sinned, but Israel was not enough better to glory over them. They too had sinned. "It ill becomes sinners to be cruel." Christ says, "Judge not that ye be not judged," or "Condemn not that ye be not condemned." "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine

own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

And not only when we think of our own sins and weaknesses as compared with those of our fellow-beings should we be moved to charity, but even more when we think of what a sinless God has overlooked and forgiven in us. How much is God willing to forgive in us?

"Here is a bottle almost full of tears,
Bundles of heartless prayers and faithless fears.
Talents grown rusty with long lying by;
A half-strung harp whose music is a sigh;
Necklaces strung with vows that once were fair,
But broken now or spent in empty air;
Thoughts, feelings, passions, all with evil rife —
Neglected duties and a wasted life."

All this can God forgive. All this and much more he has forgiven many of us. Then, if we would be like God, we must be ready to forgive. If the Son of God, who was without sin, could be patient with sinners, pray for them, forgive them, and restore them when they were penitent, we who have sinned, who know how easy it is to sin, who know how hard it is to live without sin, ought to be charitable, patient with the sinful, and ready to forgive. As one has said, "Forgiveness should be the delight of Christian men." People who have been forgiven much ought to be ready to forgive much.

Why is there not more of this forgiving spirit in the world—in the Christian world? The first answer would be, because there are such large remnants of sin in the Christian world. Another answer might be, that some people think they belittle themselves when they display a forgiving spirit,—lower the tone of their dignity. When one comes to another and says, “Forgive me the wrong I have done you; I know the act was a mean one; I know it hurt you; but it was hasty on my part, and I have suffered more for it than you have; I pray for forgiveness,” and the other turns away and says, “No, I cannot forgive you; I cannot take by the hand again so mean a spirit; cannot associate again with one who could do so hasty an act,” is it an indication of manliness or womanliness or of a great soul?—Far from it. It is a small soul that cannot forgive a penitent one. Pope was right when he wrote :—

“To err is human; to forgive, divine.”

“Great forgiveness means great character and resources in the forgiver.” The greatest Being in the universe, yea, He who created the universe, God himself, forgives. And only when we are God-like, manifesting like love and forgiveness, are our souls great and noble.

Wonderful is the forgiveness of God as shown in the gospel! And it is shown to people that are very unworthy. The limit of forgiveness by Jewish

law was thrice. A most devout Jew after forgiving his brother Jew three times was at liberty to be very unmerciful if a fourth trespass was committed. When Peter came to Christ and asked how many times he should forgive his brother if his brother sinned against him, he thought he would be generous in his question, and so put the number up to seven. His heart had grown that much larger by associating with Christ. Seven times was a great deal better than the three times of the Jew under the old Jewish law. But when he said, "Till seven times?" Jesus promptly answered, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven." That is four hundred and ninety times. By the time one has forgiven his brother four hundred and ninety times, he has so fallen into the way of it that he can go on indefinitely. And that is just what Christ meant to teach. Forgive your fallen, penitent brother without limit. Make no account of the number. Keep no books. Then He went on to give the tragic parable of the unmerciful servant. It is the most tragic of all Christ's parables. A certain king had an officer who by some means became his debtor to the amount of ten thousand talents. Orders were given that he and all his family and all he had should be sold that payment might be made. He fell upon his knees and prayed the king to be patient and he would pay him all,—a thing he could not do, for a bank-

rupt debtor cannot pay a debt of ten thousand talents. The king, knowing it could not be done, and seeing the man upon his knees, had compassion and forgave him the whole great debt. The forgiven man went out and soon met a fellow who owed him one hundred pence. In a rage he caught him by the throat and said, "Pay me that thou owest." In precisely the same language that he had used a little while before, when kneeling before the king, the man said, "Have patience with me and I will pay thee all." But in this man's heart who had been forgiven so much, there was no forgiveness. And so with violent hands he threw the debtor into prison. The story got out. The king heard of it and was wroth. He recalled this official and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due him. Then Christ adds, "*So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*"

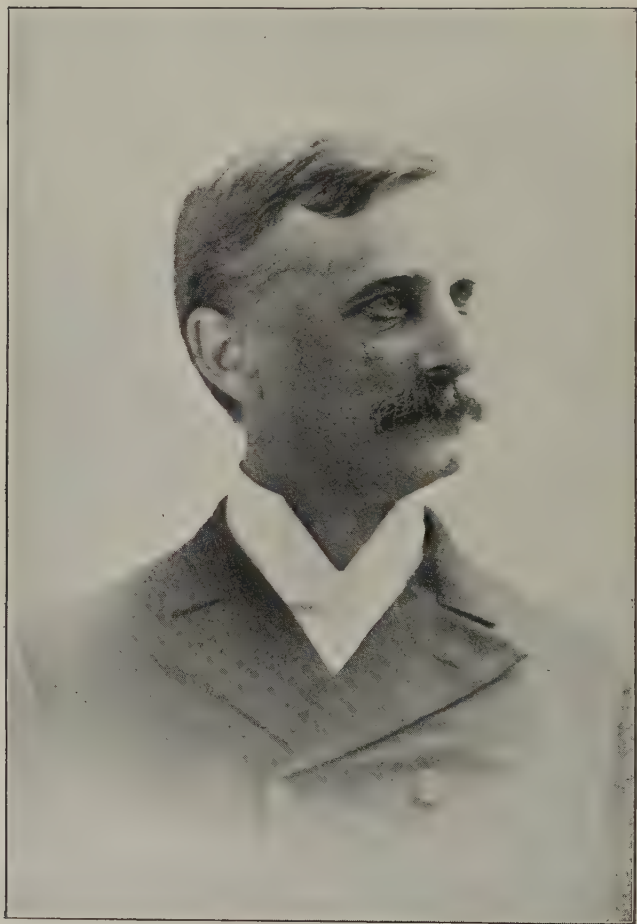
We lose the force of this parable if we fail to note not only the contrast in the conduct of the two men toward their debtors, but also the amount of the two debts. How much are ten thousand talents?—In our money, about \$10,000,000. How much are a hundred pence?—About \$17.50. So we see one man who had been freely forgiven a debt of \$10,000,000 turning about and with an unmerciful grasp laying his hands on the throat of a

man who owed him \$17.50. Is this an exaggerated illustration of truth? I do not believe that He who knew what was in man, would exaggerate. I do not believe that we, after careful thought, will call it exaggeration. There are similar occurrences to-day. There are people who have prayed God to forgive them for ten million sins, who turn and manifest an unforgiving spirit toward those who have offended them once or twice. This ought not so to be in a Christian world that has been learning of Christ for nearly nineteen centuries.

We ought not only to reap benefits from the compassion of God, but to imitate it. Dr. Mac-laren says: "Many real and imperfect Christians have got the length of looking to the forgiving love of God in Christ as their only hope, but not of looking to it as their imperative example. Their minds are, like ocean-going steamers, built in water-tight compartments, and the gospel which is stored in one, has not reached all the rest. There is no real forgiveness without previous experience of God's. There should be no real experience of God's without immediately subsequent imitation of it; but though there should not be, there sometimes is."

Let us study the forgiveness of God with a view of imitating it. So great is it that it is difficult for human language to describe it. Let me again borrow a few words from another: "The Lord is slow

to anger, plenteous in forgiveness. He multiplies to pardon; it is not a thin, transparent wave He allows to flow over the black stone of my sin, but sea upon sea, Atlantic upon Atlantic, He pours upon that blackness, letting it be found no more for ever. 'Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon,' with multiplied forgiveness, wave upon wave, billow upon billow of forgiving love, and our sin shall be as a stone cast into the depths of the sea." Thus God forgives. Therefore "be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."



REV. W. B. NOBLE, D. D.

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

BY REV. W. B. NOBLE, D. D.,

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What think ye of Christ? Matt. 22:42.

CHRIST is the central figure of the Bible. Promised from the beginning, foretold in prophecy, typified in illustrious personages, forshadowed in the ritual of the church, longed for by the devout of all ages, He was the very substance of the Old Testament, the sum of its history and doctrine, the consummation of its hope.

And still more prominently does He stand forth in the New Testament. Its history is the story of His life. Its doctrines center in His person and work. Everything pertaining to Christian experience has its source and supply in Him. Take away Christ, and the Bible loses much of its beauty and all of its saving power. A distinguished writer has shown what beauty and force are possessed by the Psalms of David, when read in the light of Bethlehem and Calvary.¹

¹ "Witness of the Psalms to Christ," by William Alexander, D. D., Bishop of Derry.

And the same thing might be shown in regard to many other books of the Bible. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." "Search the Scriptures," said our Lord, "they are they which testify of me."

The question of our text is fundamental. What we think of Christ is a matter of the greatest importance. The enemies of Jesus were asking Him questions about matters that lie around the circumference of religion,—the tribute money, the resurrection, the commandments of the law. But the question He asked them struck the very center. As the whole world takes the color of the glass through which we look, so all our views of duty and piety and the way of salvation will be colored by our ideas of Christ.

If we take the Unitarian view, and regard Him as a mere man like ourselves, or as a being who, however exalted and glorious, is something less than divine, then the very foundation of our hope will be destroyed. In this view He may indeed be a great teacher and a perfect pattern of life; but he cannot be our Saviour. We must have a divine, an almighty Saviour, or we have no Saviour at all. Wholly without meaning from the Unitarian standpoint are those Scriptures which speak of Christ as "the propitiation for our sins," of His blood as cleansing from all sin, and His grace as sufficient for us; or of His being the bread of life, the light

of the world, the resurrection and the life. If Christ is not God, then there is no atonement for sin, no salvation for sinners. We must either abandon all hope of heaven, or else deceive ourselves with false notions of God's mercy or our own goodness.

But if, as the great mass of Protestants as well as Roman Catholics believe, Christ is God, then faith has a worthy object, sin a sufficient atonement, our weakness an almighty helper, death a glorious conqueror. If Christ is God, then He can say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee;" "Come unto me, and I will give you rest;" "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life;" "In my Father's house are many mansions, . . . I go to prepare a place for you." And we can commit the interests of our souls to Him, and hope in Him in life and death.

If Unitarianism is true, how sad a thing it is for the race of sinners! We can only weep with Mary at the empty sepulcher of Jesus, and join in her sad lament, "They have taken away my Lord." But if, like her, we can look upon the face of the risen Christ, and realize with Paul that He is "declared to be the Son of God with power, . . . by the resurrection from the dead," then our hearts shall be glad and our hopes bright, and we shall run with eagerness to tell the tidings of His redeeming grace,

That we may learn what we should think of Christ let us ask,—

I. *What did the Old Testament writers think of Him?* They predicted His coming, and described many of the events of His history with circumstantial detail. They wrote His wonderful biography in advance. They foretold the time and place of His birth (Dan. 9:24, 27; Micah 5:2); His lineage from David and Judah (Jer. 23:5, 6); His birth of a virgin (Isa. 7:14); the spotless perfection of His character (Isa. 53:9); many of the incidents of His ministry (Isa. 42:1-3; 61:1-3, etc.); His entrance into Jerusalem, riding upon an ass (Zech. 9:9); His betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, and the purchase of the potter's field with money (Zech. 11:12, 13); the parting of His garments by lot (Ps. 22:18); and with marvelous accuracy many of the details of His sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection. Ps. 22; Isa. 53; Ps. 16:10, etc..

What did these writers think of this personage in whom they were so deeply interested? On this point they have not left us in doubt.

David declares Him to be the Son of God (Ps. 2:7), and represents the Father as saying to Him, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." Ps. 45:6. He also describes Him as a sorrowing and suffering Man, dying in shame and agony, forsaken of God and despised by men. Ps. 22.

Isaiah applies to Him divine titles. He is Immanuel, God with us. Isa. 7 : 14. He is called "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Isa. 9 : 6. At the same time He is "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," and His death is a vicarious offering for sins. Isa 53.

Micah declares His eternal existence : His "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Chap. 5 : 2.

And Malachi describes Him as the Lord who shall suddenly return to His temple, and who shall execute the work of judgment. Chap. 3.

Surely it is clear what was thought of Christ by the holy men of God in the olden times, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

II. Let us ask what *the contemporaries of Christ* thought of Him — those among whom He walked and taught. We cannot, indeed, take their ideas as authoritative and final ; still the inquiry is interesting, and its result may at least give us the *direction* in which the truth about Christ lies. We find our Lord on one occasion starting this inquiry Himself. "He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am ?" Matt. 16 : 13. And their answer shows that while the people did not agree as to who He was, they all regarded Him as a very remarkable personage, as the greatest and best of men, if not something more than

man. "They said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist ; some, Elias ; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." Verse 14.

Says Bruce: "When we reflect on the high veneration in which the ancient prophets were held, we cannot fail to see that these diverse opinions among the Jewish people concerning Jesus imply a very high sense of His greatness and excellence. Taken separately, they show that in the judgment of candid observers Jesus was a man of surpassing greatness ; taken together, they show the many-sidedness of His character, and its superiority to that of any one of the prophets ; for He could not have reminded those who witnessed His works and heard Him preach, of all the prophets in turn, unless He had comprehended them all in His one person. The very diversity of opinion respecting Him, therefore, showed that a greater than Elias or Jeremiah or Ezekiel or Daniel had appeared." ¹

In harmony with this was the uniform opinion of the great mass of the Jewish people. While His enemies in high places denounced Him as "Samaritan," "devil," "blasphemer," the multitude entertained toward Him feelings of the highest respect. They "heard him gladly." They "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth." They acknowledged that He

"Training of the Twelve," p. 166.^b

“taught them as one having authority.” Even the officers sent to arrest Him came back saying, “Never man spake like this man.” And the multitude generally recognized Him as “the great prophet who should come into the world.”

The verdict of His contemporaries has not been set aside by the opinion of later times. Even those who at the present deny Christ's divinity vie with us in rendering homage to the beauty and excellence of His character. They hold Him up as the one perfect flower from the plant of our humanity, the one perfect example of purity. They declare His teachings to be truth itself.

Keeping this in mind we may go a step farther and ask,—

III. *What did Christ think of Himself?* For we may press the point that a man so truthful and holy as He is universally admitted to have been, will not think of Himself more highly than He ought to think. Surely He will make no false and presumptuous claims. What, then, did He say of Himself? Was He satisfied with the ideas of the people as reported to Him by His disciples?—No. As if implying their inadequacy, He presses His inquiries further. “He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Matt. 16:15, 16. We can understand Peter's words only as declaring the true deity of Christ.

And yet Jesus, instead of rebuking the declaration as presumptuous and blasphemous, or modifying it as likely to be misunderstood, gave it His hearty and unqualified approval. He "answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Verse 17.

In the passage which contains our text, Jesus presents the same claim. He asked the Pharisees, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto Him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word." He teaches that He whom they rightly called son of David, was also David's Lord, who sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and cometh to judge the world.

His more direct claims to deity are abundant. He declares Himself "Lord of the Sabbath." (Matt. 12:8); "the light of the world." (John 8:12); "the bread of life" (John 6:35); "the true vine," giving spiritual life and fruitfulness to his disciples. John 15:1-8. He "hath power on earth to forgive sins." Matt. 9:6. He says to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? . . . Be-

lieve me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." John 14 : 9, 11. He says of the man who loves Him and keeps His words : " My Father will love him, and *we* will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Verse 23. He says, " My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5 : 17), making Himself, as even the Jews understood, " equal with God." Verse 18. He speaks of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. John 17 : 5. He demands that all men honor the Son even as they honor the Father. John 5 : 23. He says plainly, " I and my Father are one." John 10 : 30.

Bold, presumptuous, blasphemous declarations are these unless He who makes them is truly God. We must either admit the true divinity of Jesus Christ, or we must cease to regard Him as a holy man, and must denounce Him as a deceiver. The position of those who deny His divinity, but laud Him as a perfect man is utterly illogical. If He was a perfect man, holy in life and truthful in word, we must believe His testimony concerning Himself.

IV. *What did the apostles think of Christ?* We might at first sight think that the testimony of the apostles can add nothing to that of Christ Himself. But if it be true, as we believe, that the apostles were inspired to write and speak, then their testimony is but further testimony of Christ Himself speaking through them by His Holy Spirit. And if

revelation is progressive, may we not expect that its tide, instead of falling, shall go on rising even to the last, and its voice, instead of dying away, shall grow louder and more distinct?

There are some doctrines, like the atonement, which are clearly understood only in the light of the finished work of Christ. The cross on Calvary was the full explanation of John the Baptist's sermon, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," and of many sayings of our Lord, which, on their utterance, the apostles "understood not." The empty tomb was a revelation to them of the person and glory of Christ, brighter than any they had ever seen when His deity was veiled in human flesh. Ah! when He had suffered, and risen, and entered into glory, they knew Him better than they had ever known Him before. And when the Spirit had taken of the things of Jesus and shown them unto them, they could speak of Him with authority. What then did they think of Christ?

It would be impossible within the limits of a sermon to give more than a few samples of their statements concerning Him. Let these suffice: Thomas, hardest of all to convince, confesses Him in these words, "My Lord and my God." John 20:28. Peter proclaims Him as the giver of the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:33. The dying Stephen (not an apostle, it is true, but the first Christian

martyr) commits his soul to Him saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Acts 7:59. James describes Him as the "Lord of glory." James 2:1. John says of Him, "This is the true God, and eternal life." 1 John 5:20. Paul exhorts the elders of Ephesus to "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28. See also Phil. 2:5-11.

Let any one read through a single one of the epistles, or the book of Acts, or Revelation, and gather its testimony on this subject, and it will be strange indeed if he rise not from the reading with strengthened faith and more sure and steadfast hope in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of men.

V. *What has the church throughout its history thought of Christ?* Of course the Scriptures, and not the church, are the fountain of authority, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The function of the church is not to create truth, but to interpret and proclaim the truth of the Scriptures.

Yet it is interesting and important to know what interpretation the church, under the illumination of the Holy Spirit, has put upon the teachings of Scripture on so important a subject as this. And church history shows that from the beginning there has been the profoundest interest in the doctrine of the person of Christ, and that it has received very thorough discussion.

Now, the difficulty concerning the doctrine, and the occasion of discussion, lay not in the facts involved in it, but in the explanation of the facts and the reconciliation of their apparent contradiction. It was universally accepted, as the teaching of Scripture, that Christ was truly divine, and at the same time truly human. But the union of the two natures in one person was felt to be, and certainly is, a mystery. There were two opposite directions which error was likely to take, and did actually take,—one the exaltation of the divinity at the expense of the humanity of Christ, the other the exaltation of His humanity by the denial of His divinity. The latter was the error of the Ebionites of the ancient church, which has reached its extreme in the teachings of Socinians and Unitarians.

The former, or the denial of His humanity, began with a sect who held that matter was inherently evil, and hence that Christ could not have a human body without being sinful. His life in the flesh, they said, was merely an appearance (Docetic heresy). Another theory (the Apollinarian) gave Him only a partial humanity—a human body but not a soul, the divinity occupying the place ordinarily occupied by the soul in man.

These errors on the one side and the other were promptly rejected by the church (Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381). Later on came other

speculations running also to opposite extremes,—the Nestorians, so strongly emphasizing the separateness of the divine and human natures as to destroy the unity of the person; and the Eutychians and others so thoroughly fusing them as to destroy the distinctive character of both.

But, notwithstanding the oscillations of the needle, caused by the speculations of a few theologians in their attempts to explain a profound mystery, the faith of the church has always settled toward, or rather has never really wavered from, the true pole. The Council of Chalcedon, held A. D. 451, gave formal and elaborate statement to the doctrine. And the Chalcedonian Christology, as it is called, is the faith of the church, Catholic and Protestant, down to the present day.

Briefly stated, it comprises these five points: 1. Christ's true divinity; 2. His true humanity; 3. The union of two natures in one person without mixture; 4. The unity of the person possessing both divine and human attributes; 5. The divinity of the person of Christ.

In modern times attempts have been made chiefly by German theologians, to explain more fully the relation of the two natures of Christ to each other, especially with reference to the mental growth and development of the child Jesus. Taking their name from the Greek, and in Phil. 2:6, translated "he humbled himself," or in the revised version, "he

emptied himself," these are called Kenotic theories ; their idea being that during the time of His earthly career, the Son of God either in whole or in part laid aside His divinity, resuming it after His resurrection from the dead.

But these theories have not met the acceptance of the church. It is impossible that God should cease to be God, or that He should lay aside any of His attributes. What the apostle teaches, in the passage referred to, is that the glory of Christ was for the time obscured by His dwelling in the flesh ; that He laid aside, not His divinity, but the manifestation of it. In all his humiliation He was the same divine being, walking upon the sea, raising the dead Lazarus from the grave, and opening the gates of Paradise to a dying thief.

The doctrine of the church from the beginning has been the doctrine of the Scriptures, the doctrine of the divine human Christ, son of Mary and Son of God.

Mysterious it is beyond a doubt, but let us not stumble at its mystery. "All things go out into mystery." A God whom we could fully understand would be no God, but a being no greater than ourselves. Nay, there is a mystery in our own being analogous to this mystery in the person of our Lord. In every human being there are two natures in one person ; the soul, or the spiritual nature ; and the body, or the physical nature. Who

can explain their union? How can two things so different in their nature be joined together in one?

If, then, the mystery of our own being baffles us, let it not shake our faith that we cannot explain the higher mystery of the union of the two natures in the person of Christ. Let us rejoice that we have a Saviour who is both divine and human; our fellow-man to sympathize with us, our God, mighty to save. He who wept human tears by the grave of Lazarus, and with divine power called the dead man back to life, is our friend and brother, our Redeemer and Lord. In Him the wants of our souls are fully met. To Him let our adoring praise be given now and evermore.

THE ANCHORS OF THE SOUL.

BY THE REV. J. M. PATTERSON.

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Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. Heb. 6 : 19.

THE anchor in olden time was frequently spoken of as the sacred anchor. It always stood as the emblem of hope. By early Christians it was adopted in reference to the stormy ocean of life, and sometimes with reference to the persecutions of the early church ; hence the anchor is found engraved on rings and monuments and on the walls of the cemeteries of the catacombs ; sometimes it is found associated with the fish, which was used as the symbol of the Saviour, and in this combination wrought out the motto, "*Spes in Christo!*"

It has also been suggested that the fact that the transverse bar of an anchor forms a cross, may have given rise to the use of the anchor as a Christian symbol.

The anchor is essential to the safety of the sailor. He holds many things as absolutely essen-



REV. J. M. PATTERSON.

tial ; he must have sufficient provision for his voyage ; he must have rope and canvas and chart and compass, but nothing is more absolutely essential, nothing so indispensable as the anchor. The sailor who would go to sea without an anchor would be considered worse than a madman ; and when the anchor is lost, as it sometimes is in a storm, the loss is considered incalculable. It matters not how great or how small the ship, how long or how short the voyage, how valuable or invaluable the cargo, the anchor is nevertheless essential.

The anchor is needed to fasten the vessel, and steady and stay and protect it in the midst of the storm ; it is needed to help guide the vessel through narrow channels ; it is needed to fasten and fix the vessel in the harbor ; it is needed chiefly because of the winds and the tides. If the water were always calm, and there were no strong currents, and if there were always a straight and wide and sufficiently deep channel, possibly the anchor might be dispensed with ; but under existing conditions it is absolutely essential to keep the vessel from drifting away and from being broken to pieces upon the rocks and reefs.

In the great voyage of life the soul needs anchors just as truly as the ship ; it needs them because there are storms of trial and storms of temptation, and because there are tides and currents and undertows in the human heart that tend to drive and

drift the heart and life and character away ; if, in the journey of life, we should never encounter contrary winds, if there were nothing within human nature that was temptable, nothing on which sin and Satan and the world and the flesh could secure a hold, if there were not two laws in our members, one of which consists of an undercurrent of selfishness and worldliness, then it might be possible for the soul to make a safe passage over the ocean of life without the help of anchors ; but such is the ideal rather than the real humanity.

In existing circumstances the voyage must be stormy, and we must be prepared to battle with wind and wave, "and with whirlwind wrestle," or be resigned to make shipwreck. When I look into your faces, especially the faces of you young people, I tremble for your safety.

Your pulses beat fast, and your blood runs hot ; you are just at the time of life when temptation has peculiar power over you, and when disappointment and affliction may result in the shipwreck of your soul. These trials and temptations and storms and undercurrents, if properly met, will be overcome. They are God's means of testing us ; and it is for us to prepare to show ourselves worthy of the love and the confidence and the favor which He has manifested toward us. The anchor keeps the ship safe in the time of storm. There is no

sight more beautiful than that of a great ship riding the waves safely in the time of storm. At such a time the entire safety of the ship depends upon its management — upon keeping her head to the sea and to the tempest ; very often life and death hang for hours in the balance, it being uncertain whether the ship can hold her head to the storm, until the tempest has passed. A single wave striking her broadside would shatter her hull ; her only safety is in facing the storm ; and for this there is no means equal to the anchor, for no sooner does the anchor bite the ground, than the vessel that has been drifting to the waves broadside, turns a sharp prow to them and cleaves them in two, and allows them to pass harmlessly by. Those in charge of the ship watch for the veering of the wind, and instantly turn the vessel to meet it, so that neither wind nor wave can strike her on the broadside. As it is with ships, so it is with souls ; we need an anchor to help us to face bravely and successfully the waves of trouble and temptation, (See “ Parable of the Anchor,” *Foster’s Ency.*, p. 6480.)

And then, the anchor keeps the vessel when in the harbor from drifting with the tides and currents, and so the anchor of the soul is needed to keep the soul from drifting away ; and after all, this is one of the greatest needs of the soul’s anchor. It is marvelous how easily the human heart drifts away.

Paul, in his letter to the Romans says: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them." It is against this tendency to drift that you and I need to guard most assiduously.

As you will naturally infer from these suggestions, the character of the anchor is a matter of supreme importance. In olden times the anchor consisted simply of a huge stone, with a rope attached thereto, or a basket of stones, or a sack of sand, or a log of wood loaded with lead. Such were the anchors used by the ancient Greeks. These anchors, of course, simply operated by the law of inertia, and held the boats by friction along the bottom of the stream. Later, iron was used as the material out of which the anchor was constructed, and the greater improvement of forming them with flukes, or teeth, by which they fasten themselves to the bottom of the stream. The invention of teeth is ascribed by some to the Tuscans, and by others to Midas, king of Phrygia; but whether invented by one or the other of these, it has been a perpetual blessing to the world.

The modern anchor follows, in the main, this invention, only the ancient anchor was less reliable because the work of the smith was less perfect. To-day, these anchors are made by the use of steam hammers and furnaces and fan blasts, in place of

the old-fashioned bellows ; and the increased knowledge of the art of forging has rendered the modern anchor almost infinitely superior to that of the ancients ; indeed, so perfect is the art that we rarely hear of a broken anchor.

There are some anchors for the soul which have been tested and proven trustworthy, and these I commend to you. I speak of anchors, rather than a single anchor. The iron-clad vessels, as a rule, carry eight anchors—two Kedge anchors, two Bower anchors, one Stern anchor, one Stream, and two Sheet anchors. There are anchors for the soul which fulfill for the soul the functions of these different anchors for the ship.

Kedge anchors are used to guide the ships along a narrow channel. The anchor is carried out in a small boat and dropped, and the ship can then be hauled to the anchor, and thus brought back into a channel sufficiently deep for its passage. These are anchors, in the use of which the utmost patience is required, and so I suggest that you possess yourself of the Kedge anchor of Patience to carry you through the narrows and shallow channels of life. You have need of patience in the voyage of life ; unless you are the happy possessor of this anchor, you are in great danger of making shipwreck. It is an old saying, “He that will have a cake out of the wheat must needs tarry the grinding !” It

is equally true in the great interests of life ; he that would reach a safe harbor must needs tarry, or have patience in the voyage.

The poet declares that purity is power. If so, patience is very close akin to purity, for Browning has truly said : “ I worked with patience, which is almost power ! ” And Douglas Jerrold was not far from right when he said —

“ Patience is a virtue ; catch it if you can !

’Tis seldom found in a woman, never in a man.”

“ It is the strongest of strong drinks, for it kills the giant Despair.” It is this that makes us “ bear the ills we have, rather than fly to those we know not of ! ” Many a soul has made shipwreck from lack of patience. They may have, like Paul, recovered from the wreck, but it is nevertheless a shipwreck. Among these, stands out prominently in the history of the Bible, Abraham and Rebecca.

Unto Abraham God had made wondrous promises: All the land that he could see on the North and South and East and West, God had promised to give to him and to his seed after him ; and He had also promised to make Abraham’s seed as the dust of the earth. After this promise, time rolled on ; year after year gave place to its successor ; Sara’s beauty of feature and of form was gradually effaced ; old age had stolen upon them, and yet there was no indication of the fulfillment of the promise, for

Abraham was still childless. He grew impatient. He should have believed, as we all recognize, that with God all things were possible, and that even of the stones God was able to raise up children to Abraham; but he was willing to follow Sara's suggestion, and formed that unhallowed relation with an Egyptian. He did this to bring about the fulfillment of the promise of God ; he was impatient, and in this respect made shipwreck.

It was not otherwise with Rebecca and Esau. To Rebecca God had made the promise that from her twin sons there should rise two nations, and that the elder should serve the younger. Jacob was her favorite, but Esau was the inheritor of the birthright. Nevertheless, God's promise that Esau should serve Jacob, which involved the transfer of the birthright from Esau to Jacob, remained constantly in Rebecca's mind. She became impatient for the fulfillment of this, and in her heart desired to hasten the providence, so, putting Esau's clothes upon Jacob's back, and putting a lie into his mouth, she sent him into his father's presence to receive Esau's blessing.

You remember how patience preserved David from an awful shipwreck. David was called from the sheepfold to become the successor of Saul ; Saul soon became envious and jealous of the shepherd boy ; and David became a fugitive for his life. Yet, you will remember, he patiently waited for God to

put him in possession of the kingdom. At least thrice Saul's life was in David's hand ; a single arrow sped from David's bow at two different times would have put him in immediate possession of the crown, but David restrained himself ; he possessed his soul in patience, and thus avoided staining his hands with the blood of Saul, and also incurring the displeasure of God by undue interference with His providence.

In passing along the channel of life, you will frequently find yourself run aground or run ashore. The channel is narrow and it is shallow, and you will not be able to make the progress that your soul intensely desires. The desired haven seems still a long way off, and you advance so slowly ! There is here great temptation to a spirit of impatience. You need to carry out the Kedge anchor and draw your vessel over into the channel before you can pursue your voyage ; and so I beg of you, provide yourself with this KEDGE anchor of patience ; it will prove of infinite value to you in the voyage of life.

The larger vessels also carry what they call the STREAM anchor. This is for use in a river or shallow place where a small anchor is sufficient to hold the ship. There is a stream anchor of the soul which I desire exceedingly to commend to you for your possession. I refer to the anchor of the love of

home and love of kindred. Many of you young people before me to-night are so far from your homes, that you may be considered to be far out on the voyage of life — a long, long way from home. Most of you, I assume, have had Christian homes, homes that have been mellowed and brightened and sweetened and perfumed by the grace of Christ, homes in which the Spirit of Jesus has reigned supreme, homes that were made delightful by sweet fellowship and by the tender ministries of love on the part of father and mother, brothers and sisters.

But there comes a time in the history of almost every life for the leaving of home, and that is a time fraught with infinite dangers. It is a momentous hour when the young man or the young woman turns the back upon home, and faces a cold, heartless world. Cowper put it right when he said : —

“ My boy, the unwelcome hour is come,
And thou, transplanted from thy home,
Must find the colder soil, the bleaker air,
And trust for safety to a stranger's care ! ”

And yet, even to this poetic thought I would suggest a modification. Let the boy away from home trust for safety, not so much to a ‘ stranger's care ’ as to the care of a home enjoyed in reflection and lived over again in meditation. Let it be a fixed principle with you that the memory of home shall never die ;

that your soul shall remain linked to the souls of your old home by golden chains of love, chains that no wear and tear of time can destroy.

You will be infinitely better for such an anchor. Some one has said: "I am the better for thinking of the trees that grow and the flowers that bloom about my childhood home;" and Woodworth expresses the same thought when he sings: —

"How dear to my heart are the scenes of my childhood,
When fond recollection presents them to view.
The orchard, the meadow, the deep, tangled wildwood,
And every loved spot which my infancy knew!"

A fond mother who was bidding adieu to her son about to take his leave, gave him this parting injunction: "My son, remember that there is good blood in your veins!" I do not mean to intimate that it will be of any help to you in the world in the great conflict of life, to pride yourself upon your pedigree; I believe that blood tells in man as in beasts, but I believe it is possible for every one of you, by the grace of God, to enrich your own blood. If you have not good blood in your veins, you can make the blood good that is already there; but it will be a great help for you to remember with constant love and sympathy and fondest gratitude, the associations and experiences of home. This love for home is one of the strongest anchors holding us to the path of rectitude and virtue. Burns

recognized the power of affection for home, and closed that matchless picture of the home life in "Cotter's Saturday Night" with these words : —

"From scenes like these, old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad."

Napoleon captured at one time an English sailor who was trying to escape across the Channel in a small skiff which he had constructed from bits of wood and bark. When brought before the great warrior he was asked if he really meant to risk his life in crossing the Channel in such a crazy contrivance? "Yes, Sire, and if you will let me, I am willing to try it yet!" Napoleon replied: "You must have a sweetheart whom you are anxious to revisit." "No, I only wish to see my mother, who is old and infirm." "And you shall see her," was Napoleon's reply, "and take her this money from me; for she must be a good mother to have such an ambitious son." Such a love of mother and affection for home will protect any one in crossing the great channel of life, even though sailing in a shaky craft, and over stormy seas. So I beg of you, take the *STREAM* anchor of love of home with you, and keep it strengthened by close and constant communion with those you have left behind, and it will be a really wonderful shield and protection to you in all the journey of life.

Bower Anchors.—Ships carry two Bower anchors, and these are for ordinary use, so I beg to commend to you the two bower anchors of Hope and Righteousness. Without these you cannot get on well in the voyage of life. “Which hope ye have as an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast!” I doubt if any man who has lost hope ever makes a successful voyage in life.

“Hope springs eternal in the human breast!”

In the battle, hope is half the victory; the army that goes forth to conflict with a spirit of despair, only proves to be a true prophet; their defeat is almost certain. David met Goliath not so much with the sling and the pebbles gathered from the brook as with the heart of hope. Campbell has truly said:—

“Auspicious hope, in thy sweet garden grow
Wreathes for each toil, a charm for every woe!”

Hope sets her bow in the stormiest cloud, kindles her star in the darkest night, furnishes a balm for every wound and a joy for every sorrow. Hope is the good Samaritan that finds us on the Jericho road, and ministers to us in our misfortune. Longfellow has truly said: “The setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun,—the brightness of our life is gone!” And Milton has inspired many a heart with his song in “Paradise Lost,” when he says:—

“What reinforcement we may gain from hope !
If not, what resolution from despair !”

It is hope that extracts joy from sorrow, and organizes victory out of defeat, because, as Shelly says, “Hope creates from its own lack the thing it contemplates.” The truth is, every undertaking in life is inspired by hope. It was under the banner of hope that Noah set out to build the ark ; that Abraham went forth to a country that he knew not ; that David went forth to slay Goliath ; that Paul, in the midst of his shipwreck, cheered the disheartened crew, and cast the four anchors out at the stern.

It is under the inspiration of hope that the farmer goes forth in the spring-time and prepares the soil for the seed ; that the merchant stores his shelves with goods ; that the professional man goes forth to his office ; that the house-wife goes about her daily toil ; that the children take up their steps joyfully to the schoolhouse ; that the statesman evolves great schemes for the benefit of his constituents ; that the warrior goes forth to battle ; and that every enterprise is undertaken and successfully consummated.

Truly, without hope there is no endeavor ; the man whose heart is possessed of despair hides himself in the cave of Adullam, or in the shade of the juniper tree, and asks God to let him die ; and why should not we have on board the anchor of hope ?

The true doctrine is : While there is a God, there is hope ; and David has given us the philosophy of life in his dealing with his soul, when he said : “ Why art thou cast down, O my soul ? . . . Hope thou in God ; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.”

The bower anchor of righteousness is of equal importance ; a good conscience is absolutely essential to strength. “ My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure ! ” “ Conscience makes cowards of us all ! ” and well might the great master poet have added, “ Conscience makes heroes of us all.” The man with a good conscience has nothing to fear. The reason that Felix trembled before the preaching of St. Paul, was because Paul reasoned with him of righteousness and temperance and judgment to come ; and this sort of reasoning aroused his evil conscience, and Felix tremble. Think of it ! a mighty ruler, endowed with full power of life and death, trembling before the address of a prisoner in chains ! Paul was strong and courageous because he had a conscience void of offense, but Felix trembled because he had an outraged conscience.

I have suggested that one of our greatest dangers was from drifting. This is true. We drift into the current of worldliness, into the current of selfishness, into the current of false practices, into the current of sensuality ; and as we drift into these

currents, we drift away from the place of prayer, and the commands of God, and go off into the places of danger. It is useless for us to attempt to excuse ourselves or to justify ourselves in the practices that are not strictly in accordance with the law of God. I believe it is possible for every soul to keep itself pure and true and loyal to God even in this world of wickedness and temptation. In other words, I believe it is possible to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. If God so provides that the bird can immerse itself in the water and come forth without a drop of water clinging to it ; that the worm may crawl through the filth and the mire without retaining any of that filth or mire ; if he enables the lily, pure and white, to grow in the bogs and marshes and yet retain its purity and whiteness ; I believe that He will also provide the human soul with the means of preserving itself from corruption and unrighteousness. In other words, I believe it is possible by the grace of God to keep the conscience void of offense toward God and toward men ; and the nearer we succeed in this, the safer will be our voyage and the more joyous ; and so I commend to you the bower anchors of Righteousness and Hope.

Sheet Anchors.—These are large anchors that are stowed away in the waist of the ship, and are used only in cases of emergency, or in the event of any accident befalling the bower anchor. So God has

provided for the soul the sheet anchor which we call faith. It is this anchor, you remember, that Luther was accustomed to let down in case of great emergency; he let it down by the cable of that 46th Psalm: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."

It is this anchor that Job resorted to in the time of his great emergency; his camels were gone; and his sheep and his cattle and his servants also, and his horses and even his children and he himself were sore afflicted, yet what did he do? Satan said that he would defy God, but in spite of that, Job let down the sheet anchor of faith. It is this anchor that saved the three holy children that were threatened with the fiery furnace in the event of their refusing to worship the heathen gods; it was this anchor that protected Daniel, when, in defiance of the king's evil covenant and threatenings, he prayed with his windows open toward Jerusalem, and went down into the lion's den and came out unharmed. It was this anchor that protected Paul when his friends tried to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem lest bodily harm should befall him, and he declared that he trusted only in God, and that in the path of duty he need have no fear.

In short, this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith; and if we are the happy pos-

sessors of all these other anchors, yet have not this sheet anchor of faith in God, which trusts Him in the darkest hour, not only when the wind is contrary, but when all things seem to be against us, we shall certainly sometime make shipwreck.

The apostle declares that faith is the evidence of things not seen; and so, the vessel that quietly, and seemingly without effort, rides the waves in the midst of the storm, and is not carried away thereby, but remains still in its place, is evidence of an anchor that is not seen, that reaches down through the waves by its cable, and fastens itself by its flukes upon the rocks or the earth, and fastens itself more securely because of the wind and the wave.

So with the soul. In the midst of the trials and afflictions of life, there is an evidence of the existence and operation of this sheet anchor of faith which reaches not down, but up to the very skies, and takes hold upon the very heart of God himself.

In addition to all these anchors, there is the *mooring anchor* and the *stern anchor*. The *mooring anchor* is the anchor that is permanent in the harbor, and the *stern anchor* is used when it is required to moor at both head and stern, where there is not room for the ship to swing with the tide. The *stern anchor* that I would commend to you is the anchor of gratitude,—to love God because he has first loved you,—and the *mooring*

anchor is the Cross of Jesus Christ. He stands ready and waiting—a stationary anchor in the harbor for you to tie yourself to. Tie yourself to this anchor by the confession of your faith in Jesus Christ. As well might the sailor be ashamed of his anchor as for you to be ashamed of your love to Jesus Christ.

It is claimed that a good anchor after being deflected one half second will return to its original shape, leaving no permanent set. And so, I beg to commend to you as the sum of all this thought, the anchor of the religion of Jesus Christ; it has been thoroughly tested; it has been weighed in the balance and has not been found wanting; it has protected many a life ship through the severest storms, and it will protect you. There are those who will tell you, "Get something modern;" but I tell you no sailor will reject his anchor because it is old-fashioned. The anchor used to-day is exceedingly old-fashioned, very like those used by the ancient Phœnicians, long before the coming of Christ into the world.

Do you think the sailor would adopt some other anchor simply because he ought to be progressive? and that he ought not to use instruments that were invented thousands of years ago? Do you think the sailor would reject the old-fashioned anchor simply because there have been great improvements made in the building of ships? The fact is, this old-

fashioned anchor has been thoroughly tested and thoroughly tried; and with the sailor the adoption of an anchor is not a matter of experiment, but a matter of life and death; and before he will adopt a new anchor, it must be proved to him that it is better.

I beg of you, decline to adopt any new religion or source of help and protection in life unless it has been proven to be better than the old-fashioned religion of Christ. What does it matter how old an anchor is, so it *holds* in the time of storm and need? And what matters it how old the religion of Christ, so that it will make drunkards sober, and thieves honest, and sinners saints?

Cast the anchor of faith, then, into Christ. The best place for casting an anchor, we are told, is in from ten to twenty fathoms of water, where the ground is not rocky or loose sand. It will not do to anchor in floating seaweed, or floating logs; it will not do for you to cast anchor in the sand of your self-righteousness, or the floating rubbish of your own morality. Cast your anchor into the substantial and abiding Christ.

LOVE'S BITTER CUP.

A sermon preached before sacrament, January 29, 1893.

BY REV. JAMES CUMING SMITH,

Pastor Trinity Church, San Francisco, California.

*O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.
Matt. 26 : 39.*

JESUS had instituted the sacrament, and fortified Himself for the supreme trial by fortifying the disciples for their responsibilities. He drew His best strength from strengthening others.

The sermon in the upper chamber suggests the Sermon on the Mount, though rather by contrast. The one was uttered at the inauguration of His ministry, the other at its expiration. The one was addressed to mixed multitudes on whom He had compassion, the other to His chosen and confidential circle with whom He held fellowship. The one was complete morality, the other was deep and, to many, mystical spirituality. The one emphasized the legal relations of man with God, of man with man; the other disclosed these strange and submarine connections of man with God as Saviour,



REV. JAMES CUMMING SMITH.

as sympathizer. No one can analyze the two without a conviction of the divine development of Jesus during the interval. Those three years of sad experience had been quietly sculpturing a nature capable of rapid and profound progress.

The dusk had drawn its vague shadows over the world. The soul of Jesus grew lonelier as the hour of destiny drew on. He left the city, with its crowd of foreigners and streets of buzzing groups. He felt lonelier in the crowd than in the dreariest wilds of nature. He was defeating the Prince of evil, and on this event hung the fate of men. At that hour and that time alone the church was militant in the true sense. Since that epochal strife, the church has been not so much contesting as conquering, and the millennium is a foregone conclusion.

Gethsemane was the severest temptation of our Lord's career. Up to that hour He had been "straightened till it should be accomplished." But in that dark interlude of inaction when all the thrill of public wrath or public opposition was withdrawn; in that perilous lull between stormy and exhilarating anxieties, when thoughts crowd in to break the will and exaggerate (if possible) the responsibility,—in that experience, He appeared to vacillate for the moment. Gethsemane involved the reconsideration and a momentary recantation of a lifelong ambition,

The defenders of the full deity of Jesus have staggered at the commencement of His ministry when He was exposed to temptation. How could He be tempted, if more than man? We reply that Scripture is leonine; it speaks with a grand negligence of consequences, because it speaks the bold, broad fact which must bend all metaphysics to it. Scripture affirms the God-head of Jesus, and also the peerless manhood. His human nature was the theater of all the passions and ambitions which, because unregulated, jangle and jostle one another in the fallen human heart. He was assailable, but he was sin-proof, not alone because He was divine, but because He was perfectly and architecturally human. A full-formed manhood is in its very nature, resistant to sin. As you grow up toward completeness of character, you acquire contempt for what swindles dwarfs.

In this sense Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, but He was more thoroughly tempted in this crisis of haunting suspense. Every inducement was held out to Him to relinquish the enterprise just at its consummation. The temptation drove Him to the verge of surrender. "If it be possible, let this cup pass." Did it not denote a weakness somewhere to ask release from an engagement so transcendent? to shrink from the last climax of sacrifice which would seal the purpose of incarnation? This depends upon what you think He shrank from.

Weakness it would have been, if you think it was the physical phase of the ordeal which unmanned Him; for there have been martyrdoms to rival Calvary in point of physical torture.

We read of the uncompromising fidelity of early saints; we read how men and women stood at the gory arenas of Rome with thousands in the surrounding galleries hungering for the spectacle of death struggles; how a divine calm settled on their uplifted features as if they were superior to their tragedy; how they were never so serene as when the onrush of hungry beasts extorted a yell of frenzy from excited spectators; and when *their* heroism mounted to a noble stoicism to physical pain, it would cast a taint on Jesus to suppose that it was chiefly the physical endurance of Calvary which shook His fortitude.

Nor was it the ordeal of facing brutal mobs. I admit the horror of a crowd infuriated with passion. The crowd swept with rage, crying, "Give us Barabbas! Give us Barabbas!"—the crowd hounding Him on, in their inveterate hatred, to His execution,—no force of nature can approach its horror. The demonism of a wild mass of men is the closest approach to hell. For the time being, the multitude led by its demagogues, and delirious with its own vindictiveness, must be in a measure acquitted of criminality. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

We blame the leaders who saw the proof of His divinity, repeated and above-board, without being convinced. We blame the thousands who had received grace and healing from His ministry, and at this hour kept silent lest they should be implicated in His alleged blasphemies. We blame the disciples whose faith may have suffered sore eclipse as their Master was leveled to a felon, and who undoubtedly shuddered before an enraged city.

We are not here to condemn their cowardice as if it were at all exceptional. We blame the deep-seated treachery our general nature is capable of, and which a crisis only exposes. But on the other hand, we see the divine in the one brave soul in all that storm. Jesus alone was *mob-proof*. They could in the garden capture Him ; but only after having cowed the band to the ground, He voluntarily surrendered Himself. They could hoot and jeer in open court at His withering replies or more withering silences ; but all the same they could not break that iron will or extort one quick-tempered word. They could compel Him to carry His own cross, but His was the mien of one who permitted their coercion for purposes beyond their understanding. He moved with a regal, unruffled self-command because of a telescopic imagination which saw the far-off.

The priests were for the moment. His achievement was to dominate the ages and determine

eternities. The fact that Jesus was a mere victim, has been overdrawn, just as the meekness of His life has been construed into passivity. He never conquered so much as when He seemed conquered ; He never rose in such masterful superiority over the people as when He was seemingly their victim ; only physically and by His own permission was He a lamb among wolves ; really He was a lion among them. It was a contest above and beyond all this which wrung from the overborne nature of Jesus the cry, "If it be possible, let this cup pass." It was a contest whose lower side we call Calvary, but whose upper side loses itself in the upland of mystery.

When a younger man, I was bound to know the reason of everything, but I have grown beyond that stage. The best things of earth, while facts that govern every life, have a background of mystery into which we can pioneer but a little distance. The secret and sea-depth of Calvary are utterly beyond the explanation of man. The first word of the prayer, "Father," is the closest solution at our command. Between the Father and the Son there had been, from forever, the fellowship of absolute love. They had come down from the hoarest eternity like two ships on the open shining sea ; but a vast curdling cloud closes over the two mighty ships, so that for the first time on that long, sunlit voyage they seem separated. Never had their rela-

tion appeared strained till that hour. Never till then had the Son felt the lurid wrath of the Father. Never till then had He been overfraught with the responsibility of a humanity to be redeemed. And somewhere up around those heights was the storm center, just as the Alpine villager can look up to the mountain cliffs where the hurricane is tossing the snows like spray, but the villager sees only the outer edges ; the awful struggle of avalanche and cyclone, the whirlwinds of wintry wrath — these are far beyond and far back from his gaze.

It is significant that the disciple of deepest insight omits Gethsemane.

We see the mingling manhood and Godhood of Jesus. "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass," was the outcry of a shrinking, shuddering human heart. "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done," unveils His divinity.

We see that Gethsemane finds its duplicates in every life consecrated to duty whose two qualities are difficulty and solitude. An obligation to be such taxes your will, crushes and crucifies your ambitions, your bigotries, your jealousies, your cowardices, and consequently the enforced solitariness of principle. You unbosom to few or none the thorny disciplines of duty. You feel ashamed of some reluctances because they unscreen inherent weaknesses ; or you feel that in your deepest crisis God alone can sympathize.

Gethsemane was a greater Calvary and involved an element unique and unapproachable. Besides difficulty and solitude which characterize all heroism, it stands forth for atonement. The polar principle of our religion is the unqualified deity of Jesus. The coronal feature of His mission was the sacrifice which satisfied the justice of heaven in some manner, partly and only partly explicable. You can find rest of soul and anchorage to faith even though you cannot fathom the mysteries of that superhuman conflict. So long as the fact is yours, you must worship it all the more because of its impenetrable background. Reverence implies a measure of agnosticism. Faith is truth we know, shading into truth we know darkly. I think more of these revelations because I cannot bind and blend them into a clear-cut system.

As I see the boulders rugged and separate along the canyon, I care little whether human masonry can harmonize them with one another. I only know that they fit into the mountain cliff whence they fell. Reverence for dogmas is impossible when you unshroud them of their mystery. Your sacrament ought to be the more restful and joyous, because while clear enough to grasp as a fact, the sacrifice of Jesus has underlying principles that defy your comprehension.

It was not a mere martyrdom ; for a martyr influences others, but cannot redeem others. A

Ridley, a Savonarola, a Paul, were martyrs whose names are a legacy of power because they stood sternly to truth. They might have recanted and the world would have lost but so much influence. But let Jesus veto his own laws ; let Jesus retract His Sermon on the Mount ; let Jesus deny or even disguise His Deity ; and history is foredoomed, the emancipation of unnumbered millions is frustrated. He was a representative of heaven on earth, but He was also a representative of earth before heaven. If He wins, all win ; if He fails, all fail.

Atonement is martyrdom, and vastly more. It scathes sin, but shields the repentant sinner. Atonement is a judicial achievement which penetrates the foundations of all government. Atonement appeals to a holy and righteous God in championship of a race which sinned. Atonement may extend to millions never of earth, who have fallen from God, just as a canon fired off on one mountain sends its reverberations from point to point, along a whole mountain range ; nor can any trace its farthest echoes. We glory in our atonement all the more because we cannot follow its remotest influences, nor fathom its philosophy. Enough for us to know that with a growing sense of guilt we look to Christ who died to set us right with God.



REV. J. B. STEWART, D. D.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING.

BY REV. JOHN B. STEWART, D. D.,

Pasadena, California.

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 1 Cor. 1 : 21.

IN most of the ancient faiths it pleased the gods to destroy. They were vengeful, sullen, and inaccessible. It remained for Christianity to bring God and man within speaking distance. Fate had usurped the place of faith, and law excluded love. It is the great achievement of the gospel that "they who were afar off are brought nigh." But even in the sanctified heart a remnant of the old heathenism remains. Hence the first duty implied in the text is—

I. To seek a knowledge of God through Christian eyes rather than heathen.

In our efforts to know moré of God, it is encouraging to be told that God desires to be known. Most men believe that it is God's nature to conceal and not to reveal. But light, not darkness, is the

“habitation of his throne.” Light is the rule, darkness the exception. Satan, not God, is the “Prince of darkness.” What men regard as the divine reticence is often but another name for our ignorance. It is *man* that inhabits darkness—*God* dwells in light. Inaccessible, indeed, but only as the sun is inaccessible, while self-extending and self-imparting.

It is not God’s nature to retire within Himself. He has no desire to shut out His intelligent creatures. He takes no enjoyment in the solitude of His own immensity. “He rejoices in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights are with the sons of men.” It is only because darkness and negation are eternal necessities that they exist. They come largely of matter being finite and space infinite, at least this is true where no immediately benevolent end is to be conserved.

The telescope reveals sixty-four thousand suns within a space no larger than can be covered by a half dollar held up at arm’s length. Think of it! Sixty-four thousand suns, each like our own, the center of a system! Who will say that God does not take kindly to light and revelation? He is not a solitary God, He is a social God. He is a fatherly God, and with reverence be it said, a brotherly God. He never did anything more like Himself than when “he became man”—our Brother—and “dwelt among us that we might

behold his glory," and at the same time enjoy His sympathy.

The obstacle lies not in the Creator's unwillingness to communicate, but in the creature's unwillingness or inability to receive the communication. Just so it is with nature. She is always ready to give up her profoundest secrets, and to make them the property of the human race the moment that even one man can be found capable of receiving the revelation.

God is not driving men back from the throne, like earthly potentates. He is not walling them out, lest peradventure they become too familiar. It is to-day a thousand times more difficult to obtain an audience with the czar of Russia than with the Creator and supreme Ruler of the universe. God can afford to be on terms of intimacy with His subjects. His throne needs no fictitious artifices for its support. It is established. Thus we see that the divine mind is on the side of light and revelation, limited mainly by man's capacity and willingness to receive.

This being so, the world's actual theology is measured not so much by God, the object, as by man, the subject. What the man is, his theology will be. Its growth will be in the ratio of the man's piety and intelligence. Thus it is in nature. The same facts are in the heavens,—the same planets, and the same stars,—the same revelation ;

but all men do not have the same ability to understand the revelation; there is a subjective difficulty in man's stupidity. The same stars that burned in space and fixed the gaze of Galileo now look down upon the poor, ignorant wretches that swarm in the streets of Rome and Naples. But what did the stars say to Galileo or what to Copernicus, and what do they say to the lazzaroni?

Or, what is more to the purpose, what did they say to the wisest of the ancients who were questioning nature in regard to the great mysteries of the "unseen and eternal"? What said the stars? Did they reveal the comforting fact that in the midst of all this iron-clad penalty which nature is exacting all around us, the heart of God is going out in loving sympathy toward His sinning and suffering children?

How God may dispose of the ancient heathen, or the modern, we know not. Let dogmatism answer the question. We only know that it will be by another law than that to which the enlightened men of a Christian congregation stand responsible.

For the ancient heathen world — the subject of the Apostle's declaration — nature had no theory of divine government above naked, absolute, unconditional retribution. Nature was the only revealer, and nature knew nothing but law. Law moreover was inexorable. Penalty was supreme.

Thrust your hand into the fire, and you will be burned, and it serves you right. Fire would not be fire if it did not burn. Water would not be water if it did not drown.

Interrogated upon the great question of the ages, — “How can a man be just with God”? — nature had no answer which could bring comfort or strength to the fainting heart. “I hear no prayers,” she said, “I grant no pardons,” “I take no bribes,” “I know no repentance,” “I listen to no explanations, and accept no apologies.” That is what nature said to Socrates, to Epictetus, to Marcus Aurelius, and to all the world that “by wisdom knew not God” — that only — a clear case beyond question.

Two thousand years ago — we are reminded. Very true. The world is growing older and wiser, let us hope. And what if nature should now be found to be more communicative! Reason has been doing wonders. She has been making marvelous discoveries. Well, the first duty of reason is to be reasonable, and the first duty of a man who appeals to reason is to hear what reason has to say. Appealing to reason, to reason he must go; and reason admits that there are some things which reason cannot do. This is all that the text affirms. There is no disarrangement of reason. In her proper sphere reason is as legitimate as Faith, and in obtaining a saving knowledge of God both are

necessary. The visible declares the invisible. Hence,—

II. Between true faith and right reason there can be no conflict.

The mistake of reason is in undertaking to perform the office of faith, and faith makes a similar mistake when she takes the place of reason. The two great heresies are faith without reason, and reason without faith. Neither is Christianity. "Faith is the gift of God," and so is reason. They are children of the same Father, though not necessarily co-ordinate. With this fact before us, we have the same right to insist upon a reasonable reason that we have to demand an intelligent faith. We have also the right to insist that the two shall go together.

Reason without faith is like skepticism. Faith without reason is fanaticism. And here lies the two-fold danger of the church. Her Scylla and Charybdis are rationalism on the one hand and superstition on the other. Let her keep an eye toward either shore and in mid-stream hold her way onward. While faith is exalted, reason must not be ignored nor ostracized. In His public ministry, Jesus always honored the fact that right reason is not the enemy of religion. In fact His system is founded more largely than many suppose upon the testimony of the senses in the exercise of right reason. Hence the miracles, hence the

whole range of the "Evidences of Christianity" as we have them to-day. They date back to something that men saw, or heard, or felt, and concerning which they reasoned, made inferences, and drew conclusions as we do to-day. It is not a sin to reason, nor yet to accept the testimony of the senses. "Blessed are they that have seen," though still more blessed are "they that have not seen and yet have believed."

Ours is a reasonable religion, and they are not its friends who represent it as avoiding the light which reason has to give. Paul was a simple-hearted Christian. He had the faith of a little child; it was his polar star. But Paul was also a Christian philosopher. He grappled with the profoundest problems that ever honored the human intellect. He wrote the Epistle to the Romans.

Jesus never laid an injunction upon thought. He had nothing to say about the lower or the "higher criticism;" but He did say, "Search the Scriptures;" and with those to whom He spake, it meant the closest and most critical examination of which honest scholarship was capable. It meant, "Get down the old manuscripts, the Hebrew Bible, the original text; and if your own Scriptures do not testify of me, then do not believe me." Reason has its place. Learning has its place.

There is no priest-craft in Christianity, no dark-lantern affair, no concealments, no wedge of gold

nor goodly Babylonish garment in the tent of Christianity, that she should avoid a search-warrant. Our religion, if it is the godliest, is also the manliest that ever offered itself for human acceptance. "In secret have I done nothing," said its great Founder; "I have done all things openly." It is a questioning religion meeting a questioning age and a questioning humanity. And standing as we do in the presence of Him who says, "Come and let us reason together," we fondly indulge the hope, that the time is not far distant when, in the church at least, the old philosopher's dream will be realized, and men will no longer be either killed or persecuted for asking questions.

And yet the present is a time when men do well to find the *Fountain* of light and authority. We have had reason; the world had it. Reason had a grand opportunity and a fair trial, but she failed; still was it true that "the world by wisdom knew not God?" What next?

III. *The church offers herself.* — When "the world by wisdom knew not God," it pleased God to give the *church*, we are told — the visible church being meant — an advance upon heathenism, but one in which loyalty to church takes the place of loyalty to Christ. In the text the church is suggested by the omission — conspicuous by its absence. Why, must be puzzling to an ultra-churchman. Why should the *church* be passed over in

seeking for the great Revealer ? It starts the question, What is the visible church which men declare a "fountain of authority" ? There is doubtless an invisible church catholic somewhere in the minds and hearts of men ; and if this could be heard from, the *vox ecclesiae* might perhaps be accepted with a show of reason as the *vox dei*.

But the voices we do hear are from the *visible* church. Multiform in its constitution and contradictory in its utterances ; organized by divine authority in its fundamental concept, an "earthly house of God ;" but too often in "strife and vain glorying" for the gratification of unholy ambitions, and always by good men and bad men from good motives and bad motives. The visible church would seem to be but a poor fountain of authority.

Thus we are forced back to God. God is the only fountain ; all else are but media — channels through which God may communicate to give Himself out to the children of men. Reason has her place, the church has her place ; but of the one it is not said that "it pleased God to save" them that *know*, nor of the other, that it "pleased God to save" them that *obey*. Instead we have the declaration that "it pleased God to save them that believe," faith *including* both knowledge and obedience. Thus, for the knowledge of God, and the salvation of the soul, we are called upon to emphasize —

IV. The supremacy of faith coming ordinarily through the written Word.—Ordinarily—for true, saving faith came to Abel and others before there was a written Word. Supreme—that is to say, supreme in Faith's own domain, as Reason is supreme in Reason's own domain. They are friendly monarchs of two friendly empires. Faith honors Reason so long as she minds her own business, and does not meddle with that which does not belong to her.

But to see God and to know Him is pre-eminently the office of faith. We are surprised that this cognitive, or knowing, quality of faith is not more insisted upon; for the knowledge that faith gives is *saving*, and can be obtained in no other way. The knowing is as important as the trusting. To know God is to love Him, and to love Him is to trust Him. The sequence is inevitable, and the result is salvation; hence the phrase "saving knowledge" is more than cant. It means to know God in the loveliness and the lovingness of His character, as faith alone can reveal Him. As between reason and faith it is a question, not of exclusion, but of supremacy.

The thing affirmed of Reason is that she cannot know God. And of Faith that she sees God. She "endures as seeing Him who is invisible." The visible is quite enough for Reason. Let her manage testimony, she will have her hands full if she

does that. She can even go a little farther, and "feel after God," and finally confess "the unknown God." But to the questions, Who? What? Whence? or Where? she has no answer. She knows mathematics, and that is something to boast of; but Faith knows God. The one is natural, the other is supernatural. Not that faith is utterly divorced from the natural; for it is not. My faith sees London though I never was in London; and that far the natural takes hold upon the invisible. Even in this the eye of faith can see farther than the eye of sense.

More is needed however. London is natural, and beyond London and all the material universe there is a vast domain of the supernatural beginning with God. Shall this be ignored? Are God and soul and immortality to be passed by? Is the sin problem to be counted of little or no consequence? Are we to have no light shed upon this mighty mystery of life and destiny? Are we to be left to grope our way down to the tomb asking questions and receiving no answers? Or is there a sense, a faculty, an endowment, a revelation, a voice, or anything that can enable us to penetrate this great wall of thick darkness?

Faith, you say. Faith in the world by wisdom believed in immortality. What? In immortality? Socrates believed in immortality. Faith in the supernatural? Socrates believed in the supernat-

ural. Faith in divine revelation? Socrates believed in divine revelation.

But belief in a quality is not belief in a person. Reason had not reached in any true sense the concept of divine personality ; and to have predicated Fatherhood and Brotherhood of divinity would have been blasphemy. The personal Christ was wanting,—the divine Brother, “the express image of the Father,” the visible manifestation of the invisible God.

A radical change was at hand. Reason had failed after a fair trial. The great Athenian had been four hundred years in his grave. The mighty Plato, his great expositor, had risen, and still the inspired testimony must be borne, “The world by wisdom knew not God.” Reason must now give way to faith—the portico to the pulpit, wisdom to weakness, the philosophers to the fishermen. Proud Greek! To give it all up and join the “Salvation Army!” Let us pity him.

The word “foolishness” lets in a flood of light upon the subject. It points to the preaching of the cross which was “foolishness to the Greek.” Thus interpreted, preaching stands for faith. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” True preaching is God speaking to the soul through the written Word. God is the preacher. He may employ an ambassador, or He may not ; but the end is salvation through knowledge of Him-

self in the person of His Son. Faith cometh by preaching, a pure heart by faith, and a pure heart sees God. That is the divine concatenation. And this is the fact to be emphasized,—not the clear head, but the pure heart sees God, and the pure heart comes by faith.

Faith is the seeing, as well as the trusting quality of the soul. It has an intelligence peculiarly its own, which acts in the spiritual world analogous to instinct in the natural world. It reaches its conclusion by a bee-line, while reason struggles, falters, and fails. Faith is intelligent, it understands. "By faith we understand that the worlds were made by the word of God,"—"understand" is the proper word.

John Ruskin, in speaking of Judas, says that he did not understand Christ—could not make out the worth or the meaning of Him. Of course he could not. Christ is "spiritually discerned," and Judas had no eye for the spiritual; he was blind on that side of his nature. He knew Christ as a man who worked miracles and who could probably be trusted to work yet another, and thus free Himself from the hands of His enemies. Christ would escape, and Judas would have the "thirty pieces of silver." He had a keen eye to business, was evidently a sharp, wide-awake business man, and was no doubt elected treasurer on the strength of his business ability. Ruskin says, "He was a muddle-

headed fellow, with just brains enough to make money." But we may spare the epithet. There are some things — and great things too — "which are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes." Christ's divinity and even the perfection of His humanity were too deep for Judas. He could not see them nor understand them, but it was not because he was muddle-headed. It was not more brains, but a pure heart that he needed, to see God, or even to see a good man.

A bad man never sees a good man, much less can he see God. For the function he must have the faculty. That faculty is faith; and when all other sources of knowledge have failed, faith comes to the front. Moses' rod swallows up all the other rods. There is a point up to which it may be safely recorded, "The magicians of Egypt also with their enchantments did likewise;" but sooner or later we reach a point beyond which "the magicians of Egypt" cannot go.

Take Pardon of Sin. Let Reason undertake the solving of this great problem. Nature is Reason's Bible; to her Bible must Reason turn for light. She must be consistent; she must say to Nature, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." And to Reason we say, "Handle your Bible reverently. It is a great book. We love to read it. It has marvelous revelations. If you will not have our Bible, take your own, and

make the best of it. Nature, like God, is on the side of light and revelation. She is not averse to giving up her secrets. If she has pardon for sin, she will say so. She is honest and truthful. Ask her if she knows of any way by which "a man can be just with God."

We have tried to read this book of Nature with thoughtfulness and fairness. We find sin enough—sin everywhere—but no pardon. The fact is, nature is but another name for law, and law knows no pardon. Pardon is not of the essence of law. If mercy come, it must be from somewhere *outside of law*.

What does Nature say to the man who sins against her and against his own body by a reckless course of dissipation? What does she say when the man's vital powers are hopelessly impaired, his blood poisoned, his lungs decayed, his heart crippled, and the whole economy of digestion and assimilation so fearfully enfeebled as no longer to be able to support the wasted tissues or to meet the daily demand? What does Nature say to the poor wretch as he lies bemoaning his folly, and vowing a hundred times over that if ever he shall rise from that bed of pain, he will lead a new life, and be a better man? Does she say to this sinner, begging and pleading for mercy, "Look unto me and be ye saved," or "Come let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as

white as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool"? Does she say, "I will forget the past," "I will remember thine iniquities no more against thee," "I will give thee new lungs, a new liver, a new heart, new nerves, pure blood, and a healthy brain"? Not so does Nature meet the man who has cast off her authority or trampled upon her laws. She stands before him the impersonation of an insulted avenger.

She says, "I have warned you by my servants, rising up early. I have plead with you to regard your own interests, and when you have disregarded and violated the laws of your physical being, I have still brought you health and healing. But now your day of grace is over. No repentance will now be accepted, no promises of amendment. You have despised my goodness; now lie there and take what you deserve." That is what Nature says to those who sin against her.

True, nature makes an effort at healing within certain limits, but the healing is never final—no *immortal* healing. It is only temporary, a stay of execution, for there comes a time when nature can do no more, death—the inevitable—supervenes, and for death nature has no antidote. No help here; none from nature; none from reason; none from law,—law but no love; penalty but no pardon; sin but no Saviour; hunger but no food; thirst but no water. Oh! it is pitiful to see the

millions of our poor, famishing humanity "coming hither to draw" and turning away with empty pitchers from these dry wells, so utterly unsatisfied!

But a voice comes in the midst of it all, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;" "Whosoever shall drink of the water that *I* shall give him shall never thirst;" "If any man thirst, let him come unto *me* and drink."

Yes, there is "one way given under heaven whereby men can be saved;" and one way is enough if it be God's way. But it is *faith* or nothing. Law saves no sinners—she saves the innocent. Law says, "You have sinned, and you must die." Faith says, "You may live. It is at your own option; *choose* it, and you have it." Reason puts you in league with nature's power, which ends in death. Faith calls in God's power, which is life. Reason is for wise people, but faith serves the ignorant as well as the wise. We hail a plan of salvation that gives ignorance a chance. Thank God for a gospel that can find its way outside of Boston, and breathe other air than that of the university!—a gospel that is not afraid of the "Cowgate," and can keep its bearings in the old "Five Points," a Jerry Mc Cauley gospel, that bids the wretched victim of rum, poverty, and squalor look up to the heavens, and remember that they are men and women, and that for them Christ died.

And then the hard places of life common to us all—we all meet there; and whence the strength to help us over? There is the point where God makes foolish the wisdom of this world. “Where is the wise, then?” “Where the disputer?” The strong man, strong of nerve, mighty of brain, here trembles “like a reed shaken of the wind.” He is dealing with God. He is weak, but he lays hold upon God’s right arm, and now he is strong. The sublimest thing in all this world is a humble, suffering, trusting human soul. It is the seed-thought of that marvelous poem—the book of Job. Grandeur than Homer, but never so grand as when in the midst of it all, there is given to suffering a voice, and to sorrow a song—the sacred drama—the “Divine Tragedy” of the far-away land of Uz, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him,”—simple, childlike trust in God!

Faith we call it; well, faith let it be—leaning on Him—leaning hard. He has spanned the chasm, bridged it with mercy—chasm deep and dark, bridge narrow, fragile; it seems trembling beneath your feet; but no matter, it is God’s bridge, trust it. Love built it, love measured its strength, and love can never deceive you.

It is an old story. Chalmers told it first, others have told it since, for well does it bear the telling. Afoot the great Scotchman, as was so often his wont, had found his way to the humble abode of

poverty. Across the burn was the peasant's lonely home. It was late in the evening, and growing dark. The "wee bit ingle" shed an uncertain light upon the water, through the open door. The plank was weak, he "kenned," for one so burly. The good man drew back, but kindly eyes were watching, and in clear broad Scotch there came the assuring words, "Lippen to it Doctor." "Aye, lippen, that is the word, woman; it means to trust, to give your full weight to it, I will lippen to it."

And when in after days a poor old Scotch soul was struggling in the dark valley for a firmer foothold, the same good Doctor stood at the bedside, helping the weak "old body" to find the way. Of faith he spake, but ill was he understood. He tried this and he tried that, but with small success. It was then that with a flash came the incident now years ago. "Just lippen to Him." "Aye, lippen, is that what you mean, Doctor? Yes, I can do that, I can lippen to Him!"

We must all come to this at last. Peasant or philosopher, it is all the same. "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."



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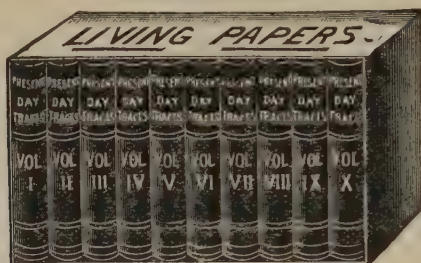
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